



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

Noe Valley Farmers' Market Grows Up

Volunteers Celebrate 5 Years of Open-Air Produce on 24th Street

By Lorraine Sanders

Need a reminder that good can prevail over senseless acts of wrongdoing? You just might find that very sort of message hidden between the rutabaga and the parsnips at the next Noe Valley Farmers' Market, which celebrates its fifth anniversary in the neighborhood on Saturday, Dec. 6.

Ask anyone involved with the thriving year-round Saturday market held in the Noe Valley Ministry's 24th Street parking lot across from Martha & Bros. Coffee, and you'll learn, as many in the neighborhood are already well aware, that the market traces its roots not simply to its opening day in early December 2003, but back months earlier to the closure of the still-vacant Real Food grocery store, whose abrupt shuttering on the eve of Labor Day in 2003 and subsequent failure to reopen remains a prime topic among neighborhood residents.

"As a result of that terrible action, we've got this market now, and it's been

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Farewell to Paul Kantus, Keeper of Noe Valley History

By Bill Yenne

Paul Kantus, Noe Valley's beloved archivist and a lifelong Noe Valley neighbor, died on Nov. 4, 2008. As his wife Edith Kantus said, "Although he traveled far and wide, he always called Noe Valley home."

The man whom Friends of Noe Valley member Eleonore Gerhardt described as "an incredibly dedicated and generous person" was born in San Francisco on Jan. 14, 1926. Except for his time away at sea, he lived all of his nearly 83 years in the Noe Valley house where he grew up.

An engineer, film buff, and eager student of history, Paul was known throughout his life for sharing his talents with his community. In fact, the word "generous" came up every time I asked people how they remembered Paul. To this sentiment, Bob Roddick, of the Noe Valley Association, added that Paul was "a wonderful individual with a great sense of humor."

"Agreeable" was another word friends and family used. If you asked Paul if he would do something for you, his stock reply was: "Oh, sure." Paul's lifelong friend, Asta George, told me that she had never seen him mad. Come to think of it, none of us had.

Paul was the only child of Julius and Emmy Kantus, both of whom fled Estonia during the Russian regime. Julius had left Estonia to avoid service in the Russian czar's army. "He stowed away on a

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Noe Valley Farmers' Market founders Leslie Crawford, Peter Gabel, Paula Benton, and Steven Powell will mark the fifth year of the food mart by recalling its roots. Photo by Pamela Gerard

Milk Brings a Man, and a City, to Life

Review by Liz Highleyman

Milk, Gus Van Sant's epic Harvey Milk biopic, brings the late supervisor's legacy to life, but a stinging electoral defeat in November emphasized in a more visceral way that his struggle for gay equality is not yet complete.

The film, which opened Thanksgiving week to coincide with the 30th anniversary of the Nov. 27, 1978, murder of Milk and Mayor George Moscone by fellow supervisor Dan White, transformed the Castro early this year, as numerous storefronts took on vintage facades and thousands of extras recreated scenes of mass demonstrations.

Milk opens with the supervisor record-

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What's It Like to Be Best Friends with David Sedaris?

Inquiring Minds Ask Veronica Ruedrich of Astrid's Rabat Shoes

By Andrea Aranda

Author, playwright, and National Public Radio star David Sedaris is well loved across the United States and around the world. But perhaps nowhere else is he more adored than in lit-crazy San Francisco. His self-deprecating humor and fatalistic view of life have made works like *Me Talk Pretty One Day* instant best-sellers at neighborhood bookstores. (Just try to get a seat at a Sedaris reading at Cover to Cover.)

When his latest collection of essays, *When You Are Engulfed in Flames*, was released this summer, local fans might have noticed the dedication on the first page: "To Ronnie Ruedrich."

It just so happens that "Ronnie" is Veronica Ruedrich, one of the more familiar faces in Noe Valley. Ruedrich, 52, who lives in the Mission District, has managed Astrid's Rabat Shoes at the corner of 24th and Sanchez for two decades. She's also—you guessed it—a close friend of Sedaris, who currently resides

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Walter Semkiw: Revolutionary Warrior for Reincarnation

By Joshua Brandt

In 1995, Dr. Walter Semkiw embarked on a spiritual odyssey that culminated in a startling epiphany: he is the reincarnation of John Adams, the second president of the United States.

But Semkiw, who works as a physician in the occupational therapy department at Kaiser Hospital-San Francisco, waited several years before coming "out of the closet" about his discovery, which he knew others would find questionable.

"Well, the problem was really simple," says Semkiw, 53. "I didn't want to be run-

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Paul Kantus spent a lifetime admiring and preserving Noe Valley history. Here he poses while sharing old photos at a Noe Valley Library reopening party last spring. Photo by Sally Smith

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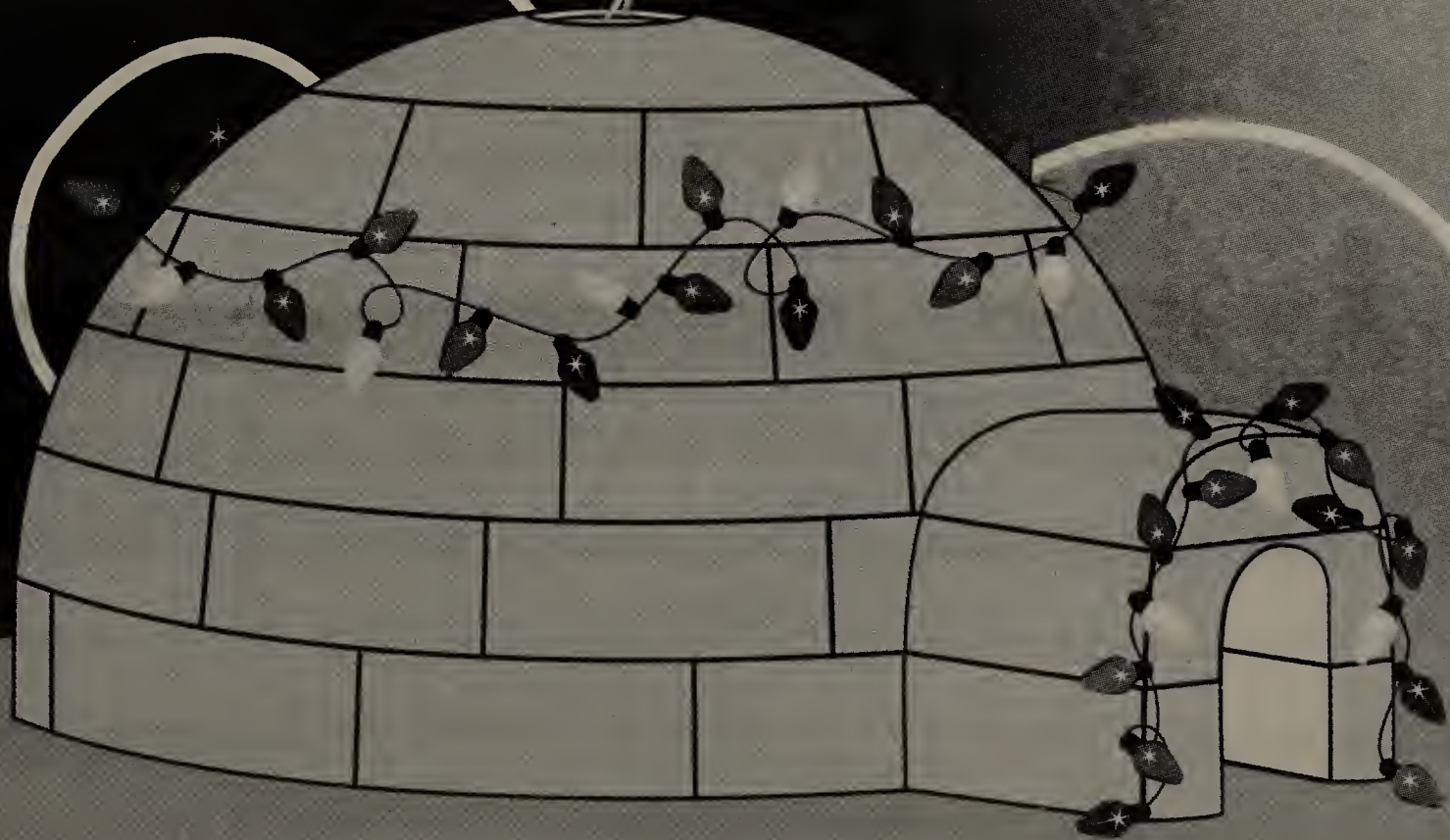
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The *Noe Valley Voice* is an independent newspaper published monthly except in January and August. It is distributed free in Noe Valley and vicinity, on or before the first Friday of the month. Subscriptions are available at \$30 per year (\$25 for seniors) by writing to the above address.

The *Voice* welcomes your letters, photos, and stories, particularly on topics relating to Noe Valley. All items should include your name, address, and phone number, and may be edited for brevity or clarity. (Unsigned letters will not be considered for publication.) Unsolicited contributions will be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

The *Noe Valley Voice* is a member of the San Francisco Neighborhood Newspaper Association.

E-mail: editor@noevalleyvoice.com

Editorial Office: 415-821-3324

Website: www.noevalleyvoice.com

Distribution: Call Misha, 415-752-1726

Display Advertising: Call Steve, 415-239-1114
Class Ads: See Page 49

Display Advertising Deadline for the

February Issue: Jan. 18, 2008

Editorial/Class Ad Deadline: Jan. 15, 2008

CO-PUBLISHERS/EDITORS

Sally Smith, Jack Tipple

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS AND EDITORS

Olivia Boler, *Last Page Editor*

Corrie M. Anders, *Associate Editor*

Laura McHale Holland, *Associate Editor*

Heidi Anderson, Andrea Aranda, Karol Barske,

Joshua Brandt, Sue Cattoche, Helen Colgan,

Chrissy Elgersma, Jan Goben, Liz Highleyman,

John Hohulin, Florence Holub, Jeff Kaliss,

Doug Konecky, Bob Oaks, Erin O'Briant, Pat Rose,

Roger Rubin, Tom Ruiz, Lorraine Sanders, Karen

Topakian, John Trinkl, Kate Volkman, Heather World

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Pamela Gerard, *Photo Editor*

Beverly Tharp, *Senior Photographer*

Najib Joe Hakim, *Senior Photographer*

Jan Brittonson, Leo Holub, Charles Kennard,

Doug Konecky, Ken Newman, Paula Whitehead

PRODUCTION

Jon Elkin, Sally Smith, Clare Sullivan, Jack Tipple

ILLUSTRATION

Karol Barske

WEB DESIGN

Elliot Poger

ADVERTISING SALES

Steve Steinberg, *Advertising Manager*

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

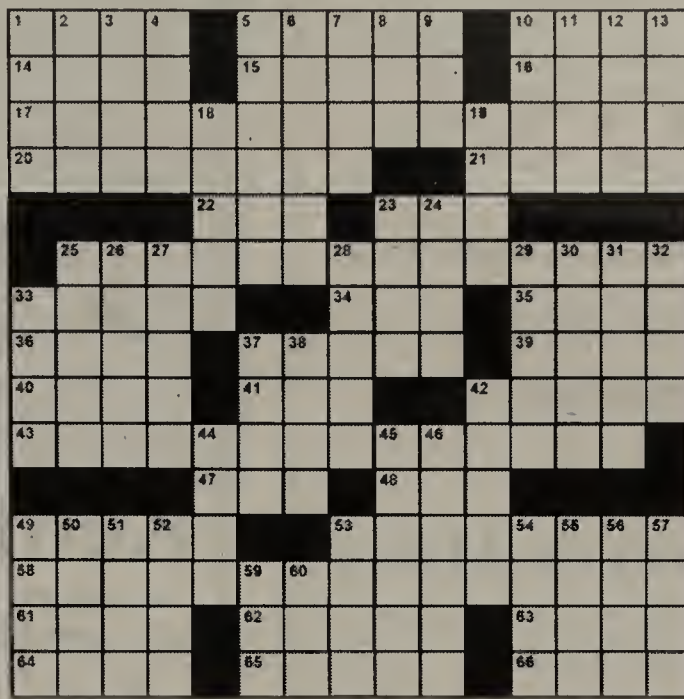
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CROSSWORD BY MICHAEL BLAKE

Tom Swift Shops Noe Valley

ACROSS

1. Betwixt and between
5. Molecule parts
10. Firefly, Bacco, and Incanto all have one
14. Transfer to a new town, in brokerspeak
15. Sub's "ears"
16. LBJ Biographer Robert
17. "Call Lone Star Plumbing—the kitchen disposal needs declogging!" Tom _____
20. Like black bananas
21. Come-from-behind victory
22. Ending with Siam
23. Florist's vehicle
25. "I can make a great meal all with tinned foods from Bell Market," Tom _____



33. Jack and Clifton
34. "To _____ is human"
35. Lively, in mus.
36. Native Saudi
37. Like a new dollar bill
39. A Mrs. Chaplin
40. Audition tape
41. Tic-tac-toe winner
42. Leaves out
43. "Darn, Artsake is closed, and I need to get something to stand this canvas on," Tom _____
47. Drenched
48. Wee, in Dundee
49. Off-kilter
53. Crystal glasses
58. "I'm wearing the ring I bought at Gallery of Jewels," Tom _____
61. Adept
62. Sporty Mazda

63. Desiring a 6-Down, maybe
64. "Milk" star
65. Beeper calls
66. Carter and Irving

DOWN

1. West Coast gas brand
2. Griffin who created "Jeopardy!"
3. Tennis Hall of Famer Nastase
4. Paul Kantus was one of these
5. Aid
6. Top secret?
7. Fairy tale opener
8. PC alternative
9. _____ Lanka
10. Letters on a Soyuz rocket
11. Derbies and Stetsons
12. Detective fiction writer _____ Stanley Gardner
13. Four-time Indy 500 winner A. J.
18. Cloth
19. Former Georgia Senator Sam
23. DVD players' relatives
24. Org. for those 50+
25. Chartres chapeau
26. 11/4/2008 victor
27. Top monk
28. Sanders of football and baseball
29. Supermodel Campbell
30. How sardines are packed
31. Like a dryer trap
32. Singer Sumac and namesakes
33. Rolls of bills
37. Secret language

38. Lopsided victory
42. Unfortunate rhyme for 26-Down
44. "How disgusting!"
45. Huge home
46. One-celled creatures
49. "Rush!" order
50. Kemo _____ (the Lone Ranger)
51. Brick oven
52. Paradise
53. Carpet type
54. Hoops group for Swoopes: Abbr.
55. Comedian Sandler
56. _____poly
57. Concludes
59. Little devil
60. _____Maria (coffee liqueur)

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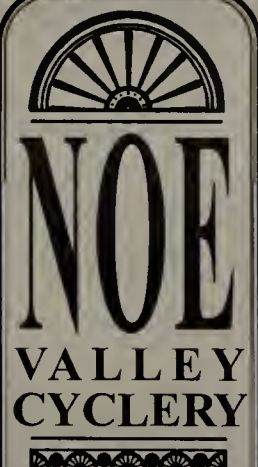


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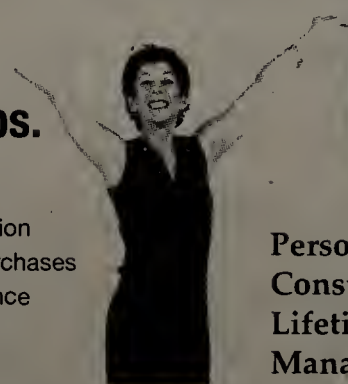
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Albert Lanier met his future wife, Ruth Asawa, on a path near the "Garden of Eden" orchard at Black Mountain College in North Carolina.

Photo courtesy of Lanier family

Albert Lanier, Neighborhood Architect, Dies at 81

By Steve Steinberg

Albert Lanier, a noted architect who designed many homes in Noe Valley and around San Francisco, has passed away. The 81-year-old Lanier, who also helped establish the city's School of the Arts, died peacefully on Oct. 31, 2008, with his wife by his side. He had been suffering from emphysema.

A Noe Valley resident since 1960, Lanier was married to famed artist Ruth Asawa. The couple, partners in love and work for more than 60 years, raised six children, five of whom still live within walking distance of the family home on Castro Street.

In addition to his residential architecture, Lanier was known for his community contributions. He oversaw the 1985 renovation of the Noe Valley Branch Library and worked to preserve the Gottardo Piazzoni murals, which had adorned the walls in the old San Francisco Main Library. Lanier helped ensure that the 1930s murals were saved after the conversion of the library to the Asian Art Museum. They are now safely installed in the new M.H. de Young Museum in Golden Gate Park.

Lanier also created the architectural designs for his wife's public art projects, including the mermaid fountain at Ghirardelli Square and another fountain at the Hyatt Hotel on Union Square.

Said his daughter Aiko Cuneo, "He was the silent partner for Ruth's public commissions. He did all the drawings and elevations, and helped her with mathematical computation. He was her biggest supporter."

Born in a small town in Georgia in 1927, Lanier enrolled in Georgia Tech at the age of 16 to study architecture. His studies were interrupted by naval service during World War II. After the war, he attended North Carolina's Black Mountain College, an innovative liberal arts school centered on the arts. There he studied under such farseeing educators and artists as Josef Albers and Buckminster Fuller.

It was also at Black Mountain that he met Ruth, who was an art student as well. The two met, according to daughter Addie Lanier, "on a mountain path coming back from the school orchard, nicknamed the Garden of Eden."

Lanier married Asawa in San Francisco in 1949. The next year, he began working as an architect in the city. By 1958 he had opened his own firm. The couple soon bought their Noe Valley house and began an active life, focused on their children, colleagues, and neighborhood.

No doubt inspired by their experiences at Black Mountain College, Lanier and his wife worked tirelessly to establish the San Francisco School of the Arts, a public high school for the performing arts, now located on Portola Drive. After long years of bureaucratic delay, the school finally opened in the early 1990s.

Lanier's architectural designs reflected his desire to create harmonious spaces filled with light. "He would tear down walls and flowingly connect the internal space of his houses with the outdoors," said good friend and fellow architect Bill Bondy, who worked for Lanier in the 1980s.

"His interiors always feel very spacious," agreed Addie. "He used skylights and windows—natural light—to achieve that effect. He appreciated simplicity. There is not a lot of ornamentation in his designs." Addie said her father was a great admirer of Frank Lloyd Wright and a close friend of photographer Imogen Cunningham.

His best-known San Francisco projects were the Mercy Terrace Apartments, the Monsignor Lyne Community building in the Castro, and the Youth Hostel at Fort Mason. But he left his mark on Noe Valley, too. You can see samples of his residential work at 3616 21st Street, 4343 Cesar Chavez, and 1116 Castro Street.

A passionate gardener, Lanier in the late 1970s pitched in to design the planter boxes behind the library on Jersey Street. "He also was active in getting trees planted in the neighborhood," said Cuneo.

Lanier's love of simplicity extended to life in general, according to his son Paul Lanier. "My father liked old-fashioned, simple things, like libraries, gardens, schools, and being in the country."

He also cared about others.

"Albert was a humanist," said Bondy.

"He loved people and appreciated their individual value."

His children will remember him as a great storyteller who enjoyed telling anecdotes about growing up in the South. Towards the end of his life, he recorded some of those stories for posterity. He often dressed in overalls, noted Addie, in the style of a Georgia farmer.

"He was pretty content with the way his life turned out," said Addie. "He was never bored. He felt pretty lucky."

A memorial service for Albert Lanier, attended by over 200 people, was held on Nov. 20 at the First Unitarian Universalist Church on Franklin Street in San Francisco.

Besides his wife Ruth, Lanier is survived by his children—Aiko, Addie, Paul, Xavier, and Hudson—and 10 grandchildren, whom he adored. Another son, Adam, passed away several years ago.



Albert Lanier, who loved clean lines and light-filled interiors, designed his son Hudson's home on Cesar Chavez Street in Noe Valley.

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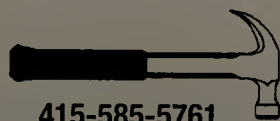
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Five Years On, Farmers' Market Growing Strong

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

very successful. And it so much more reflects the ultimate future of how we're going to need to feed ourselves going forward, as petroleum continues to dwindle and the need to do something about global warming becomes more and more apparent, so eating locally is going to be key to keeping this world habitable," says Rick Hildreth, a current member of the six-person volunteer board overseeing the market's operations.

In the five years since its debut, the market has retained its distinction as the only volunteer-supported farmers market in San Francisco. At the same time, it has grown to become much more than a convenient stopping point for organic vegetables, natural foods, and free-range meat from California growers and local farms.

On any given Saturday, rain or shine, some 1,500 people go to the market to shop for produce, yes, but also to catch up with friends and neighbors over coffee, let the kids burn off sugar highs induced by the ever-popular honey sticks, listen to live folk and bluegrass music, and enjoy neighborhood marvels like artist Mona Caron's Noe Valley-themed murals on either side of the parking lot.

"I'm surprised by what a town square it's become," says Leslie Crawford, a longtime 24th Street resident and a market co-founder. "At the beginning, Paula [Benton] and I had to go troll different farmers markets and beg farmers to try our market and be a part of this thing."

Remember Real Food

To many in the neighborhood, the market may seem like the perfect fit, a no-brainer boost to local residents' quality of life. But market founders stress the importance of understanding the market's history. Behind the Early Girl tomatoes and fresh-squeezed juices is a history born of actions by an out-of-state corporation that took away stable jobs and created an unnecessary blight on 24th Street, they say.

"It's very, very important to me to retain that historical meaning and keep that trajectory going. It's not just a place to get organic food. That's not it. It's based on social justice," says Elizabeth Street resident Peter Gabel, who helped co-found the market along with Crawford, Paula Benton, Steve Powell, and Kim Rohrbach.

The Farmers' Market owes its origins to the experiences of residents like Crawford, who one afternoon in early September 2003 struck out with her son Sam for one of their familiar afternoon walks through the neighborhood. As on many previous walks, the Real Food Company grocery store across from Bell Market was on their list of destinations.

"I show up, and it's shut and papered over. I just knew something was wrong. It didn't make sense. I remember coming home and saying to my husband, 'Something smells bad, something has happened,'" Crawford recalls.

Like many others, when she learned that the store's 30 employees had been fired without notice soon after workers had begun efforts to organize a union, she was angry.

"It seemed outrageous what they were doing," says Crawford. "I felt like, we should have some control over what goes on in our neighborhood."

Crawford wasn't the only neighborhood resident left shocked and dismayed by the store closure and the subsequent claims of employer malfeasance. Others like Gabel, who had just finished working on a community-based effort to save the neighborhood's Cover to Cover book-



The Noe Valley Farmers' Market wouldn't flourish without its core workers and volunteers. They include (front row, left to right) Elizabeth Crane, Steven Powell, Leslie Crawford, Patrick Monk, Paula Benton, and Jonathan Alloy in the J-Church T-shirt. Standing in back are John Friedman, Peter Gabel, Diane Koehler, Richard Hildreth, and John Foley.

Photo by Pamela Gerard



The Saturday market on 24th Street offers fruits and vegetables from 14 vendors, both certified organic and non-organic.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

store through the help of angel donors, former Real Food employees like Rohrbach, and concerned neighborhood residents like Benton and Powell were among nearly 200 people who attended a town hall meeting held at the Noe Valley Ministry a few weeks later. More meetings followed.

"We were coming together to say, 'We won't accept that in our neighborhood.' That was the spirit of those meetings," remembers Gabel.

For Gabel, the Farmers' Market was just one of the positive things to emerge from the meetings. A regular group of neighbors offered moral support to former Real Food employees called to testify during the subsequent unfair labor practices lawsuit against Real Food's parent company, Nutraceutical Corporation. In November 2005, the National Labor Relations Board ruled in favor of the employees. Nutraceutical has since appealed the decision, but Gabel and others consider the win an important victory for the workers.

Volunteers Make It Work

This month, the Farmers' Market is celebrating an important milestone of its own: five years of putting organic and locally grown fruits and vegetables on Noe Valley tables.

"There is no other volunteer-run farm-

ers market in the city. This is it. It's kind of a big deal. It's a special little thing," says Eureka Street resident Elizabeth Crane, who, as the market's sole paid employee, manages the market operations each and every Saturday.

Along with the acting board, the glue that holds the market together comes from a variety of sources. There's the Noe Valley Ministry, which hands over its parking lot for use during market hours. Martha & Bros. helps out by giving the market space to store its tents and equipment. And then there are the volunteers who show up to greet shoppers, count attendance, and (sorry, pooches!) keep the dogs out.

"I got involved because I think it the most wonderful thing to have in our neighborhood and our community. It's such a sense of community and good will and bounty, and for me personally, it's just what a wonderful way to spend a few hours of the week," says Church Street resident and regular volunteer Cynthia Hogan.

Not surprisingly, it's volunteers like Hogan that the market would like more of.

"As our numbers have dwindled, fewer of us do more of the work," says Crawford. "It gives more energy to the market to have more people helping."

Crawford has a long list of ideas for

how the market could improve and begin to collaborate with other organizations, local schools, and community members. But for the time being, just maintaining the status quo is all the board, volunteers, and one employee can handle.

While there are always new projects and possibilities percolating in the wings, the Farmers' Market in its current manifestation is doing the most that it can with the resources it has. It's enough to have kept vendors like Twin Girls Farms, Happy Boy Farms, and Malik Ranch around since the beginning, fueling a healthy vendor waiting list.

As the Farmers' Market anniversary passes this month, market manager Crane hopes residents will notice just how much the weekly event has brought to the neighborhood.

Offers Crane: "What a great thing that you have a farmers market in your neighborhood. Cherish it, look after it, and don't take it for granted."

The Noe Valley Farmers' Market, which operates on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 3861 24th Street between Sanchez and Vicksburg streets, will celebrate its fifth anniversary on Saturday, Dec. 6. A small celebration will take place at the market that day. In addition to the regular market wares, board member Rick Hildreth will be selling his half-hour documentary Home-grown, about local farmers markets. For details about the market or to learn about volunteer opportunities, call 415-248-1332 or visit www.noevalleyfarmersmarket.com.

WINTERLUDE

THE NOE VALLEY VOICE will take a short snooze during December. Our next edition will be the February 2009 Voice, arriving in Downtown Noe Valley on Tuesday, Feb. 3. Please send in your news and photos by Jan. 15. E-mail editor@noevalleyvoice.com or mail 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, 94114. Call Steve at 415-239-1114 if you are interested in display advertising. Meanwhile, happy holidays, and may we suggest you get warm and cozy yourself?

—Sally Smith and Jack Tipple
The Noe Valley Voice

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Veronica Ruedrich Talks About David

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

in France with boyfriend (his word) Hugh Hamrick.

Last month, I had a chance to talk with Ruedrich about her friendship and travels with Sedaris, and her life at the store. What I discovered was that “Ronnie” (but please call her Veronica) too has a knack for humor and storytelling.

Andrea Aranda: In David Sedaris’ latest book, *When You Are Engulfed in Flames*, you were the dedicatee. How did you find out about the dedication?

Veronica Ruedrich: It arrived in the mail at the shoestore from his publisher. I thought, *Oh great! David sent me a copy of the new book!* He always has the publisher send me a copy before they come out. It’s one of the perks. So I opened the package, and inside there was the book. And there was a little tab attached to one of the pages. I said out loud, “Oh good, he wrote something in it,” thinking that he had signed the book for me. I opened it up and there it was! I threw my glasses across the room and I screamed and then I called him up and yelled at him.

A: How long have you known David Sedaris?

R: I must have met him in 1975 or 1976. Whatever was my first and only year at Western Carolina University [located in Cullowhee, N.C.].

A: What was your first impression of him?

R: I was in love, immediately and completely, with him. I had a big crush on him right away. We met underneath a bush in the middle of the quad between the dorms [at the university]. There was this bush that actually had a room in the middle of it. People would go in there because it was cool. A friend of mine said, “C’mon, let’s go into the bush!” and we went in and David was in there. I got introduced to him like this (*she bends down and comes close to my face*).

A: Nowadays you two are best friends. How did that happen?

R: When we were 18 years old, it was me and him and one other person named Dana. We were like this trio that were inseparable. Dana was an extremely remarkable person. She was so enthusiastic about everything and was crazy about jazz. One night she went to a concert, I think it was a Bonnie Raitt concert. I came walking back to the apartment from doing laundry, and I saw an ambulance down there. When Dana came back from the concert she had gotten out of the car, stepped into the road, got hit by a car and was killed. So you can imagine, me and David and Dana—we did everything together. We knew the mountains behind the school like the back of our hand because on the weekends we would go bushwhacking. Then all of a sudden she was dead. She was such a special person. That is partly what sealed our friendship forever. We had something that nobody else knew.

A: How did you get from North Carolina to San Francisco?

R: I moved out here in 1977. My brother Mark was the manager of the Castro Theater. He got me a job working at the Lumiere, the Clay, the Surf, and the Castro. In the summer, David came out here to be with me, and he got a room at a hotel on Market Street. We decided that we would go apple-picking in Oregon. We hitchhiked up to Hinman Farm. Neither of us had ever picked apples before.

A: Why did you decide to pick apples?

R: We weren’t quite hippies, we were just after hippies. We were following the avant-garde. We did performance art, and the apple-picking was our version of education in the avant-garde movement. It



Veronica Ruedrich says her friendship with bestselling author David Sedaris dates back to their college days in North Carolina. Sedaris surprised her recently by dedicating his latest book of stories to her.

Photo by Pomelo Gerard

was an adventure, and that was the kind of education that we wanted.

From there we hitchhiked to Vancouver, Canada, and we had so much fun. David insisted that we stay at the sleaziest hotels there were. We would not even sleep in the sheets, we slept on our sleeping bags. We rented an apartment for two weeks in Vancouver. It had a Murphy bed and a little kitchen and everything. One day, we came down the stairs and we looked down the hallway and there were these young women with really old guys. They were wearing hot pants and fishnet stockings, and they were all hanging out. Finally it dawned on us, “Oh, my God! We’re staying in a whorehouse!”

We hitchhiked with this guitar that I bought for \$10. I knew how to play two songs, and David was so sick of this guitar. Later, I ended up leaving it in the back of a Mustang. I was so sad, but David was so happy.

A: Tell me more about the performance art. Were they funny?

R: Oh no! They were not funny. They were supposed to be thought-provoking. But they definitely had a sense of humor. They were an art piece, like an installation.

A: What kind of venues did you perform in?

R: “The Housing and Urban Detectors” was done in the rotunda in the art department at [North Carolina] State. And one of them, called “Gilt by Association,” we did at the North Carolina Museum of Art.

A: Has his fame changed your friendship in any way?

R: I get to see him more! I get to see him twice a year for his lecture tour and his book tour.

A: Have you met any interesting people through your association with David?

R: I love NPR and always have loved listening to Ira Glass [host of NPR’s *This American Life* since 1995]. Ira was the one who discovered David doing a reading in Chicago all those years ago. Eight or ten years ago, when David was out here, there was a big fancy reception for David and two other writers on the tour. I told David, “Whatever you do, I want you to introduce me to Ira Glass.” I’m a huge fan of his! At the reception, Terry Gross was there and a bunch of famous people who I didn’t even know. All of a sudden, this big tall guy comes walking

over, and he says, “So you’re Veronica! I have been wanting to meet you! I can’t believe this!” And it was Ira Glass!

A: Have you appeared in any of David Sedaris’ stories?

R: When the book *Naked* came out, he sent the manuscript to me of the story—I think it’s “Planet of the Apes”—and he said, “Ronnie, I put you in this story, but I disguised you by calling you Veronica.” And I said, “David, my name is Veronica!”

A: What’s a typical day in the life of Veronica Ruedrich?

R: I walk my dog. I walk to work. I order shoes, sell shoes. I order socks, sell socks. Water the garden. Feed my fish. Pay bills, make phone calls. Come home, eat dinner, and watch the news. That’s an “everyday” day.

A: How did you start working at Astrid’s Rabat Shoes?

R: On March 23, 1987, I walked in to buy a pair of shoes and asked if they needed any help. They said yes and that was it. I started the next day. I had bought a pair of men’s shoes for myself because back then the man-tailored look was in.

A: When did you transition from employee to manager?

R: I’ve managed the store for about 20 years.

A: How has business changed since you took over the reins?

R: We’re more focused on stylish comfort. We tailor the business to fit the neighborhood, to fit [customers’] needs so that they don’t have to leave the neighborhood to shop for shoes or accessories.

A: Was it totally different before you decided to focus on comfort shoes?

R: When I started working here, it was in the time of punk rock and edgier. There were buckles, grommets, safety pins. Astrid [Doder, the owner/buyer] liked fancy, pretty shoes. Mix that with the punk, and it was interesting!

A: What do you like about working in Noe Valley?

R: It’s like a small town within a big city.

A: Do you have a tip for customers buying shoes?

R: If it’s snug, it will stretch. If it hurts, it won’t.

A: Where do you see your friendship with David in 20 years?

R: In 20 years, we better live near each other so we can continue to see each other.

A: You might have to move to France for that.

R: I would do that. [My husband] Blair wouldn’t mind living in France. We could move to France if we had to.

David Sedaris Talks About Veronica

While David Sedaris was in town for a lecture tour, I had the opportunity to ask him about Veronica Ruedrich and why she holds a special place in his heart.

—A.A.

Andrea Aranda: What was your first impression of Veronica when you met her at Western Carolina University?

David Sedaris: Relief!

A: What do you like most about Veronica?

S: She’s loyal. She inspires trust. She’s considerate, cheerful, and silly. It’s hard to find silly people as you get older. Today we laughed until we cried. She can get so silly that she cries.

A: Why did you dedicate your most recent book to her?

S: She’s my best friend, and I’ve always wanted to dedicate a book to her. The other ones were dedicated to Ira Glass, my mom, dad, sister Lisa, and Hugh. When I dedicated a book to my dad, I got no reaction. When you dedicate a book to someone, you want them to choke up.

A: Does Veronica have any hidden talents?

S: She’s a real good driver and good at parking.

A: Are there any songs that remind you of her?

S: Anything by Joni Mitchell, because she introduced me to her.

A: Why did you go hitchhiking together?

S: She wanted to pick apples and I was too timid to do it on my own. We thought, “If we could survive this, we could survive anything.”

A: What is your fondest memory of the hitchhiking trip?

S: She had been teaching herself how to play guitar. When she left her guitar in a car, I was relieved. ■

Andrea Aranda is a regular contributor to the Noe Valley Voice and also works part-time at Astrid’s Rabat Shoes.

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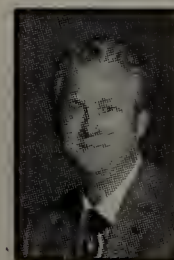
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Prop. 8 Battle Gives Milk Added Punch

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ing a “political will” to be released in case he was assassinated, which was seen as a constant threat. The story line follows Milk, then a buttoned-down conservative working for a New York financial firm, as he meets his lover, Scott Smith, in a subway station on his 40th birthday. Milk soon trades his suits for jeans, grows a beard and a ponytail, and in 1972 the two men move to San Francisco, where they open a camera shop on Castro Street in Eureka Valley, then a working-class Irish neighborhood on the cusp of major change.

Though he bears little physical resemblance to Milk, actor Sean Penn turns in a riveting performance, capturing Milk’s charisma, wit, and hunger for the political spotlight.

Though screenwriter Dustin Lance Black was only a young child at the time, his script captures the zeitgeist of the 1970s, aided by extensive consultation with Milk’s surviving associates. Period footage is interspersed throughout the film, and the re-creations are so faithful it can be difficult to tell one from the other.

In many respects, the film is as much about the city as it is about the man. Old-timers will enjoy playing “spot the character”—looking for both Milk contemporaries like Supervisor Tom Ammiano playing cameo roles, and actors portraying San Francisco icons such as marijuana activist Dennis Peron.

Milk first ran for citywide supervisor in 1973. Following this unsuccessful attempt, he donned a suit and cut his hair, but he lost again in the 1975 supervisor race and in a 1976 run against Art Agnos for state Assembly. He finally emerged victorious in 1977, after a switch to district supervisor elections allowed minority groups to elect one of their own.

Though widely hailed as the “Mayor of Castro Street,” Milk also represented the Haight and Noe Valley—then a largely working-class neighborhood that was starting to gentrify as the young people who had flocked to the city during the Summer of Love sought a quieter place to settle down and raise families.

“Harvey worked very closely with the Noe Valley Merchants Association and regularly contributed to the *Noe Valley Voice*,” recalled Anne Kronenberg (played by Alison Pill in the film), who as a “tough dyke” in her early 20s volunteered as Milk’s campaign manager and who now is a deputy director for the Department of Public Health. If memory serves, Kronenberg added, the merchants endorsed one of Milk’s opponents in his winning race.

Voice editor Sally Smith remembers joining the large and boisterous crowd outside Milk’s camera store the night he was elected, becoming the first openly gay man to win a major public office in the U.S. In his *Voice* column—titled



Emile Hirsch (left), Kelvin Yu (center left), Sean Penn (center right), and Alison Pill (right) star as real-life gay rights activists Cleve Jones, Michael Wong, Harvey Milk, and Anne Kronenberg in the film *Milk*, released Thanksgiving week at the Castro Theatre.

Photo by Donny Nicoletta, Focus Features

“Milk Harvey”—the new supervisor answered readers’ questions about various issues of the day, including his infamous poop-scooper law.

A skilled coalition-builder, Milk’s agenda extended beyond gay rights to encompass support for labor, tenants, and seniors. “Harvey was all about reaching out to the disenfranchised, not just gay men,” said Kronenberg. “He really got the connections.”

“I’m so excited to have new generations exposed to Harvey’s legacy,” said District 8 Supervisor Bevan Dufty, who represents a subset of Milk’s former Dis-

trict 5. “Harvey knew how to connect with different communities.” (In 1977, Dan White’s Sunset District was designated as District 8.)

Milk’s political debut coincided with another event that would prove equally momentous for the gay community: the religious right’s entry into politics, heralded by Anita Bryant’s campaign to overturn a gay antidiscrimination ordinance in Dade County, Fla.

Milk’s leadership in the 1978 fight against California’s Proposition 6 (the Briggs Initiative), which sought to ban gay people from teaching in public

schools, plays a central role in the movie.

Although filming was mostly completed when the California Supreme Court ruled in May that same-sex couples had a fundamental right to marriage, it is impossible to miss the parallels between the Prop. 6 battle and this year’s bitter fight over Proposition 8, which amends the state constitution to eliminate that right. Proponents of both initiatives raised fears about harm to children, while opponents debated the wisdom of “de-gay” the campaign with a generic focus on civil rights.

“To convince the 90 percent to care about the 10 percent, we have to tell them who we are,” Milk insists in the film, urging gay people to come out of the closet and leave the ghetto. “We have to let them know that they know us.”

Watching a preview of *Milk* a few days before the Nov. 4 election, it seemed evident that the film’s reception would depend heavily on the Prop. 8 outcome, with the “No on 6” victory scenes evoking either elation that one of the gay community’s final goals had been achieved, or despondency that the movement still had a long way to go.

As it happened, Prop. 8’s slim victory galvanized the gay community and made Milk—and *Milk*—more relevant than ever. The star-studded premiere in late October sold out weeks in advance, and the first public showings at the Castro Theatre Thanksgiving weekend drew lines extending around the block. The downside is that the movie may come across like a propaganda piece, and therefore may be avoided by people who do not already support gay equality.

Asked about the similarities between Prop. 6 and Prop. 8, Milk protégé Cleve Jones (portrayed by Emile Hirsch in the film)—then a young rabble-rouser who went on to a long career in political activism—emphasized that in 1978 he and his comrades felt a much more acute sense of fear.

“Then, it seemed like a snowball effect,” he said, as cities across the country repealed their gay antidiscrimination laws. (Perhaps the biggest surprise for younger viewers is that towns like Wichita, Kan., and Eugene, Ore., actually had gay rights ordinances in the 1970s.)

But while the Briggs victory was a rare bright spot amid a series of losses, Jones suggested that Prop. 8 is a temporary setback in an inexorable march forward. “Back then, we were losing and losing and losing. Today, we are winning and winning and winning,” he said. “History is on our side, and things are going in our direction.” ■



For an Oct. 28 benefit screening of the *Milk* movie premiere, the Castro Theatre was decked out in glittery lights, and fans and stars strolled across a red carpet. Photo by Liz Highleyman

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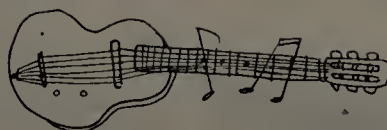
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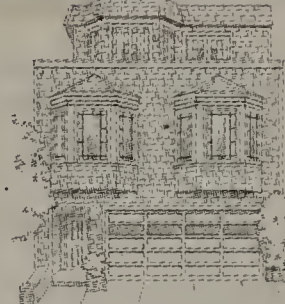
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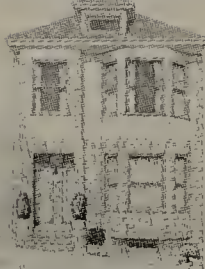
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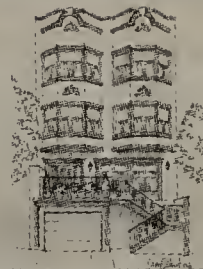
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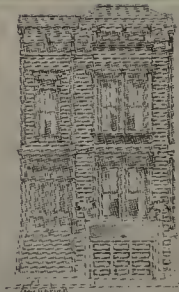
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Paul Kantus, Noe Valley Archivist, 1926-2008

• CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Norwegian barkentine around 1905, during a time of revolution across Russia," Paul told Larry Beresford in a 1986 interview for this paper. Paul went on to say that his father bought a house on Douglass Street in Noe Valley. As Paul remembered, "Pop dug out the basement, jacked it up, and put it on a foundation."

Paul attended Alvarado Elementary School, James Lick Middle School, and Mission High School. Some of his fondest childhood memories centered on the movie theaters that flourished on 24th Street in the 1930s, including the Palmer and the Noe.

Asta George knew Paul when they were both kids growing up in the neighborhood. When her family moved to Cazadero, Paul came up in the summers. "Our parents were friends before any of us were born," she explained. "Paul was like a second brother to me. He was a city boy, but he loved coming to the country. He was a fun person, always filled with lots of interesting tales."

Because Julius was a machinist, Paul was attracted to life aboard ship and

trained as a merchant seaman. He found a job as a lowly wiper in the engine room, persevered, and eventually became chief engineer. He sailed on freighters of the Moore-McCormack Line on their South American run for 18 years, and with the States Line between the West Coast and Japan for five years. He also served in the U.S. Army from 1951 to 1953, and as an ensign in the U.S. Navy from 1954 to 1964. In 1980, he left his career at sea and joined the San Francisco Department of Public Works Department, from which he retired as a supervisor in 1990.

It was during his time at sea that Paul developed his love of movies. "I still like going to the movies," he told Larry Beresford. "That's how I met my wife." Paul and Edith were married in 1973. As Edith put it, she "loved film as much as he did."

"Going to sea, we'd rent films for entertainment," Paul recalled. "I started bringing films from my own collection—which now includes over a hundred features." He enjoyed showing films for the passengers and crew, supplying them with the adventures and romances of dashing movie heroes.

As Edith said, "Any crew member who left the ship before the end of a serial was sworn to secrecy as to the identity of the real villain."

Paul especially enjoyed the adventures of Laurel and Hardy, and he joined the Bay Area Laurel and Hardy enthusiast

group known as the Sons of the Desert. As he told the *Voice* with a grin, "We meet every other month and wear fezzes."

His love of film extended to filmmaking, and he took a course in this subject in Santa Cruz, where he tried his hand at directing.

In retirement, Paul happily turned his attention to his hobbies. In addition to film, these included photography and a love of books. He also enjoyed Eric Gattmann's world affairs classes. "He'd become a fervent supporter of Barack Obama," his teacher said.

He was a member of Friends of the Library and Friends of Noe Valley, as well as president of the East & West of Castro Street Improvement Club, another important Noe Valley organization.

"He was there for his city and his neighborhood," Bob Roddick said. "Whether it was painting out graffiti or representing East & West during the formation of the Noe Valley Community Benefit District, he was there. He was an important and integral part of the neighborhood."

While he was a warm and charitable man, and a devoted husband, Paul's lasting legacy, his gift to the neighborhood, was the Noe Valley Archives. As Carol Small of the Noe Valley Library said, "He was a kind and gentle man dedicated to preserving the history of Noe Valley."

Paul spent nearly three decades collecting and preserving stories, pho-

tographs, documents, news clippings, and other memorabilia related to Noe Valley's history. My own book, *San Francisco's Noe Valley*, would have been impossible without my having Paul's work as the strong shoulders on which to stand.

He shared the collection with me, and with the library on History Day, and he frequently shared it with the *Noe Valley Voice*. "Paul was always happy to run over at the drop of the hat with an old photo," said *Voice* editor Sally Smith. "We owe him so much."

For many of us, a favorite memory of Paul is chatting with him at Herb's, where he liked to stop each morning for a cup of coffee and an English muffin. When the cafe closed last year, Paul took up his routine at Toast Eatery, Herb's replacement on 24th Street. When Eleonore Gerhardt asked him how he liked the new place, he said that he did, adding, "What's great is that they give you marmalade."

A memorial service for Paul Kantus was held at the Noe Valley Ministry on Nov. 29. Everyone at the gathering agreed that Paul, our generous neighbor and friend, would be greatly missed. ■



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Walter Semkiw— On the Front Lines of Reincarnation

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ning around saying I was John Adams if I really wasn't."

A Noe Valley resident since 2000, Semkiw has spent a third of his present existence writing, researching, and speaking about reincarnation—the idea that a soul, or identity, can be reborn in the body of another person. He's become an expert on the subject, with readers in India and around the globe. But he'll be glad to tell you he wasn't always one.

The first clues to his presidential past arrived on a cold night in 1984, when he was a medical student at the University of Illinois in Chicago. As Semkiw recalls it, the weather was particularly brutal, and there was little to do besides study. So to alleviate boredom, he decided to visit a medium. The medium told him that in a previous lifetime, Semkiw had written something on parchment paper and was responsible for "securing the ideals of humanity." The medium also told him to study the life of founding father John Adams. If he did that, the medium said, Semkiw would see himself.

Initially, Semkiw dismissed the notion as pure claptrap. And he tried to erase it from his mind. But then in November 1995, while Semkiw was working as a medical director for Unocal 76 in Hawaii, a "booming voice" once again implored him to seek out the biography of Adams (who served as our nation's top executive from 1797 to 1801).

This time, Semkiw listened. He went through close to a dozen mediums, and began conducting his own independent research. He came across pictures of Adams at a Paris peace conference where Adams' facial features were "almost identical" to his own. And, after devouring several books about the revolutionary politician, Semkiw determined he shared some of the former president's most salient characteristics, including a concise writing style and a "bluntness that can be abrasive at times."

In the years that followed, Semkiw studied prominent cases of other people who claimed to have past lives. His research formed the crux of his 2006 book *Born Again*, subtitled "Reincarnation Cases Involving International Celebrities, India's Political Legends, and Film Stars." (The book is a follow-up to his *Return of the Revolutionaries*, released in 2003.)

Among the examples Semkiw cites in his work is neurosurgeon Norm Shealy (considered the father of neural pain alleviation), who believes he is the reincarnation of 19th-century physician and



After doing years of psychic research, Noe Valley resident Walter Semkiw became convinced that he is the reincarnation of John Adams, the second president of the United States.

Photo by Pomelo Gerard

mesmerist John Elliotson. Semkiw also interviewed controversial Bay Area resident Barbro Karlen. Karlen, who was born in Sweden, claims she has vivid memories of being Holocaust victim Anne Frank.

Armed with his "documentation," Semkiw finally approached Bay Area "transmedium" Kevin Ryerson, who has worked with actress Shirley MacLaine, perhaps the most famous proponent of past lives. (Ryerson appeared as himself in MacLaine's movie *Out on a Limb*.)

According to Semkiw, Ryerson is a medium who channels several different spirits, one of whom is a 3,500-year-old former Egyptian high priest named Ahtun Re. It is this spirit, Semkiw says, who is responsible for validating most of his reincarnation intuitions.

At first, Semkiw felt strange communicating with Ahtun Re through Ryerson. "Speaking to an Egyptian spirit guide that has been dead for over 3,000 years was a novel experience for me," he wryly notes.

Still, Ahtun Re confirmed to Semkiw's satisfaction that he was the reincarnation of John Adams. Furthermore, he told him he was surrounded by related reincarnated individuals, or "karmic soul groups." Semkiw's brother George was the reincarnation of Peter Adams, the president's brother, and Semkiw's estranged wife was the reincarnation of John Adams' son Charles, with whom

he'd had a very volatile relationship.

The rest, as they say, is history.

These days, Semkiw is busy attending conferences and holding workshops on reincarnation. He also contributes work to the Institute for the Integration of Science, Intuition, and Spirit (IISIS), which he co-founded in 2005 as a center devoted to the scientific study of reincarnation. The organization gives out yearly statuettes, to the individual who makes the greatest contribution to the "objective evidence of reincarnation" and who "embodies the positive social change" that IISIS believes reincarnation promotes.

"Soul groups" remain a prominent theme in Semkiw's explorations. He believes people are reincarnated for a myriad of reasons: love, familial bonds, or the need to work together on common goals, he says.

In *Born Again*, he traces three of the major politicians of the past quarter-century—Bill Clinton, Al Gore, and George Bush—back to the Revolutionary War. (Ironically, according to Semkiw, Bush was under Gore's military supervision in a past life.)

Though well aware of the skepticism people have about his claims, Semkiw defends reincarnation as a good philosophy to live by.

"Not only is the old adage about karma true—'Don't leave an ugly footprint or it will come back to haunt you'—but reincarnation is the way to true world peace,"

he says. "If, for example, Jews knew they could come back as Palestinians, there would be a lot less bloodshed in the Holy Land. Fighting each other makes no sense if two souls have met before."

A son of Ukrainian immigrants, Semkiw was raised Catholic. However, he views mainstream religion as lagging behind the times.

"We've advanced in technology to the point where we can easily blow up the entire planet...but our spiritual point of view is based on archaic documents thousands of years old, such as the Old and New Testaments and the Koran," Semkiw says.

"Mainstream religions can't address the issue of reincarnation because it goes against their own self-interest. It's a Catch-22 for them. Religions exist because of fear of death."

Just as John Adams spearheaded the American Revolution, Semkiw believes that his charge is to lay the groundwork for a "reincarnation revolution."

"We have both dedicated our lives to social causes, regardless of risk. John Adams risked his life for the American Revolution, and I know that I'll often be ridiculed for my beliefs."

"People may laugh at me, but I feel honored to be an advocate for reincarnation research, because as crazy as it sounds, I know that reincarnation research will ultimately transform the world."

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Painting by Jude Sim

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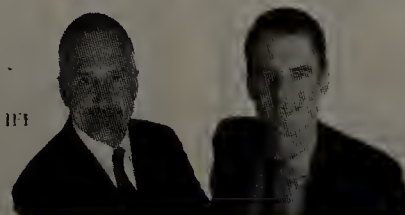
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The Cost of Living in Noe

If You Liked Last October...

By Corrie M. Anders

Surprise—the sales figures for Noe Valley homes in October look almost exactly the same as the figures for October a year ago.

And despite worsening economic news nationwide, the data shows buyers continued to pay more than the sellers' asking price to live in the neighborhood.

According to numbers collected for the *Voice* by Zephyr Real Estate, buyers purchased seven single-family homes in October 2008, at an average cost of \$1,456,000. That compares with six deals posted in October of last year, with a price tag averaging \$1,429,000.

Admittedly, there was extra enthusiasm last year. Shoppers this October paid 4 percent above the seller's asking price. A year earlier, buyers coughed up 14 percent more than the list price.

However, most deals, both then and now, closed quickly. Buyers got their mortgage loans in about three weeks this year, as compared with about two weeks last year.

The most expensive home this October closed escrow in 21 days and sold for \$2.2 million—11 percent more than the original asking price of \$1,995,000. The four-bedroom, 3.5-bath residence, with a two-car garage and 3,260 square feet of living space, is located in the 400 block of Day Street, between Noe and Castro streets.

Slower Pace for Condos

The average price of a Noe Valley condominium unit sold in October was \$1,038,000—about \$60,000 more than October 2007's mean price of \$977,000. In both cases, buyers paid slightly more

than the asking price.

Still, only five condominiums exchanged hands this go-round, compared with eight a year earlier.

The priciest condo was a three-bedroom, two-bath unit in the 1100 block of Dolores Street, between 24th and 25th streets. The 1,670-square-foot unit sold in 30 days for \$1,370,000—5.5 percent more than the \$1,299,000 asking price.

Three buildings in the two- to four-unit category were sold in October, compared with just two last year.

Randall Kostick, Zephyr Real Estate's general manager, noted that all of the recent sales involved two-unit flats, a favorite of those seeking tenants-in-common (TIC) buildings, which can be shared by two or more owners.

Subprimes Scarce

So, has the subprime crisis, which is causing loan defaults around the country, been an issue in the Noe Valley housing market?

Not actually, said Kostick, who has worked in neighborhood real estate for 22 years. For the typical Noe Valley buyer, he said, getting a standard fixed-rate mortgage "has never been a significant problem." Therefore, few subprime loans show up here, he said.

Kostick noted there was a brief "one- or two-week period in September when it was impossible to get *any* type of loan." That was when several major banks "were facing serious problems," and AIG insurance corporation was on the brink of collapse.

"We froze while that was happening," he said. "Then the [loan] market started opening back up."

Kostick described October's activity as "the last good month of the year," before buyers and sellers take a breather for the holiday season.

"Between the uncertainty of what the federal government is actually doing and the economic environment, and the fact that people want to have a Thanksgiving and Christmas because they really need it, there's not going to be much activity" in December, Kostick said. ■



Photo by Beverly Tharp

House Sells for \$5.8 Million

A newly built, contemporary-style home with commanding views of Noe Valley and downtown San Francisco has become the second property in the neighborhood to break the \$5 million barrier.

Two buyers paid \$5,818,000 for the four-level Duncan Street home, in a deal that closed escrow on Nov. 11. The developer who built the home initially priced it at \$6,250,000.

It's now the most expensive property sold in Noe Valley, surpassing the \$5.3 million home a retired Google employee purchased in 2005. (See "The House That Google Bought," December/January 2005 issue.)

The buyers did not want to be identified, according to Jon Taylor and Gary Johnson, two agents with the Paragon Real Estate Group, which brokered the transaction.

But what do the new owners get for that kind of money?

Taylor said the 5,000-square-foot home sports four bedrooms, 4½ baths, an elevator to all four levels, a four-car garage, and a separate residential unit with one bedroom and one bath. The building also has curb appeal—the design involves lots of concrete, glass, wood, and jutting angles.

The home is located in the 600 block of Duncan Street near Newburg Street, just down the road from the "Google House."

—Corrie M. Anders

Noe Valley Home Sales*

Total Sales	No.	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Avg. Days on Market	Sale Price As % of List Price
Single-family homes						
Oct. 2008	7	\$998,000	\$2,207,000	\$1,456,429	23	104%
Sept. 2008	8	\$870,000	\$1,525,000	\$1,140,313	64	101%
Oct. 2007	6	\$979,000	\$2,220,000	\$1,429,000	15	114%
Condominiums						
Oct. 2008	5	\$775,000	\$1,370,000	\$1,037,800	42	101%
Sept. 2008	6	\$690,000	\$1,150,000	\$907,500	55	100%
Oct. 2007	8	\$723,000	\$1,300,000	\$976,938	41	102%
2- to 4-unit buildings						
Oct. 2008	3	\$1,326,000	\$1,502,000	\$1,395,667	70	102%
Sept. 2008	2	\$1,475,000	\$1,820,000	\$1,647,500	79	102%
Oct. 2007	2	\$1,510,000	\$1,560,000	\$1,535,000	23	93%
5+-unit buildings						
Oct. 2008	0	-	-	-	-	-
Sept. 2008	0	-	-	-	-	-
Oct. 2007	2	\$1,515,000	\$1,650,000	\$1,582,500	56	100%

* Sales figures include all Noe Valley home sales completed during the month. Noe Valley is defined in this survey as the area bordered by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets. The *Voice* thanks Zephyr Real Estate (www.zephyr-re.com) for supplying the sales data. NOV 12/08

A Snapshot of Noe Valley Rents**

Type of Unit	Number in Sample	Range of Rents Oct.-Nov. 2008	Average Oct.-Nov. 2008	Average Sept.-Oct. 2007
Studio	8	\$1,200 - \$1,950	\$1,439 / mo.	\$1,424 / mo.
1-bedroom	37	\$1,500 - \$3,250	\$2,119 / mo.	\$2,042 / mo.
2-bedroom	32	\$1,995 - \$4,750	\$3,085 / mo.	\$3,069 / mo.
3-bedroom	19	\$3,000 - \$6,500	\$4,462 / mo.	\$4,579 / mo.
4+-bedroom	8	\$4,000 - \$8,750	\$6,253 / mo.	\$7,560 / mo.

** Survey based on a sample of 104 Noe Valley listings appearing on Craigslist from Oct. 30 to Nov. 12, 2008. NOV 12/08

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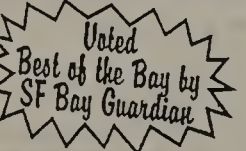
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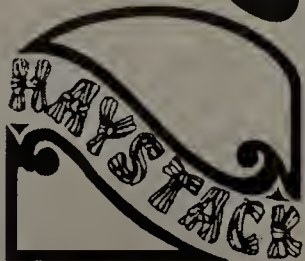
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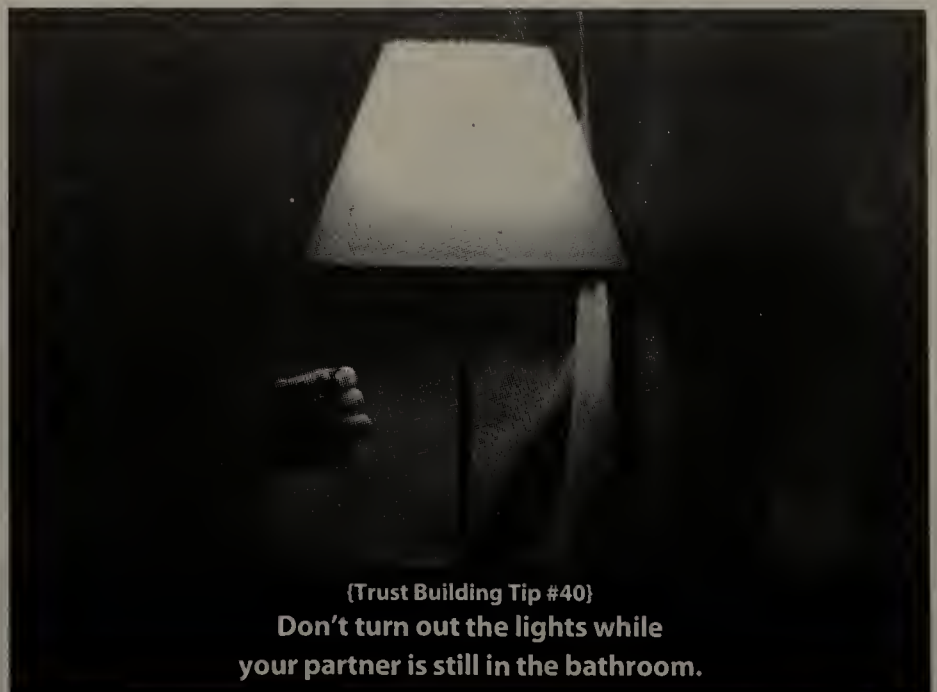
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CRIME BEAT

Report from Mission Station

By Officer Jane Warner
San Francisco Patrol Special Police

The following crime summaries were culled from reports filed at Mission Police Station. They cover some but not all incidents occurring Oct. 16 to Nov. 15, 2008, in northern Noe Valley, which is loosely defined as the area within Grand View, 20th, Guerrero, and Cesar Chavez streets.

Burglary: 800 block of Dolores, 10-28-08, 7:46 p.m. (reported): After returning home from a five-day vacation, a man noticed that a side door to his garage had been picked and was left open. During a search of the garage, the resident discovered his silver Proflex mountain bike, valued at \$2,500, was missing. The resident called police and filed a report.

Burglary: 500 block of Elizabeth, 10-30-08, 11:20 a.m. (reported): A woman left her home at eight in the morning and came back to her residence two hours later, only to find that her house had been ransacked. Various cabinets and drawers had been opened and papers strewn about the floor, along with clothes and other items. The woman noticed that her patio door was open and discovered that a diamond ring, valued at over \$10,000, was missing from a jewelry case, along with several other pieces of gold jewelry. Her checkbook also was missing. The woman called police, who responded and surmised that the suspect had gained entry through the patio door.

Theft from Vehicle: 4000 block of 25th, 10-30-08, 9:30 p.m.: A woman parked her four-door silver Suzuki and locked it while she went shopping. When she returned about three hours later, she discovered the wing window smashed and her laptop computer missing from the floorboards of her car. The stolen computer is described as a black \$2,000 Hewlett-Packard model in a blue Genentech case. There are no known suspects.

Malicious Mischief, Vandalism: 1000 block of Noe, 10-31-08, 9:13 a.m. (reported): While looking out her window, a woman discovered that the side gate to her small apartment complex had been bent downwards. The woman called police, who examined the gate and determined that someone had tried to

force it open with a crowbar. Fresh pry marks were around the doorjamb of the gate, and the handle was bent and scratched. No property was found missing, and nothing else was damaged.

Malicious Mischief, Vandalism: 900 block of Noe, 10-31-08, 9:52 a.m. (reported): Police responded to a possible attempted burglary. When they arrived, they met with the owner of an apartment house, who showed the officers a broken doorknob that had been severely damaged by someone hitting it with a hard object. The door, which was not forced open, led to a hallway of four apartments. Officers took pictures of the damaged door and forwarded their report to the Burglary Detail for follow-through.

Theft from Building: 4300 block of 20th Street, 11-01-08, 5:30 p.m.: A man came to Mission Station to report the theft of his laptop computer. The victim told the station officer that he had spent the night away from his place and returned to his residence two days later, where he discovered his black Apple laptop missing from his bedroom. When he questioned his two roommates, they admitted to having a party over the weekend attended by several people who brought guests they did not know. The man told the officer the laptop was valued at \$1,500.

Arson: Horace Mann Middle School, 3351 23rd, 11-07-08, 2:50 p.m.: Police were called to the school on a possible arson. The principal met with officers and reported that an unknown person had set a garbage can on fire in the main-level bathroom. A school employee discovered the burning trash can and removed it from the bathroom, taking it outside. The school called the fire department, which dispatched a truck to the scene. Firefighters extinguished the fire without further incident. There were no reported injuries or further damage. The officer took a report from the principal and forwarded a copy to the Arson Task Force.

Credit Card Fraud, 4200 block of 24th, 11-08-08, 2:28 p.m.: A merchant started noticing unusual charges on a business credit card he leaves in the office for employees to use for business purposes. The charges were coming from a women's clothing store and a nail salon, and totaled more than \$7,000. The merchant called police after ordering the receipts and recognizing an employee's signature. Officers took a report and forwarded it to the fraud division for further investigation.

Officer Jane Warner is a member of the San Francisco Patrol Special Police, which works in association with the San Francisco Police Department. You can reach her by e-mailing sfpatriol@earthlink.net or calling 559-9955.

Noe's Police Districts

Noe Valley falls under the wing of two San Francisco police districts: Mission and Ingleside. Mission police cover the northern half of the neighborhood, including 24th Street, and Ingleside police the southern half, starting at Cesar Chavez Street.

Both districts hold monthly meetings that are open to the public. Mission Police District's community meetings are held on the last Tuesday of the month, at 6 p.m., at Mission Station, 630 Valencia Street near 17th Street. Ingleside's community meetings take place on the third Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m., at Ingleside Police Station off Balboa Park at San Jose Avenue.

To speak to an officer at Mission Station, call 558-5400. The station's tip line for anonymous reporting of drug or gang activity is 392-2623. To contact Ingleside, call 404-4000. The Ingleside anonymous tip line is 575-4444. For citywide online reporting and e-mail addresses, go to www.sfgov.org/police.

You can also find crime data, sorted by zip code, at www.CrimeReports.com or <http://sf.everyblock.com/>.

To report a crime in progress, call 911.

Report from Ingleside Station

The monthly crime log for Upper Noe Valley, an area roughly bordered by Cesar Chavez, Guerrero, 30th, and Grand View or Diamond streets, is supplied to the Voice by Denis O'Leary, captain of Ingleside Police Station. If you would like to receive Capt. O'Leary's e-mail newsletter, send an e-mail to InglesideStationNewsletter-subscribe@yahoo.com. You can also view updates and get information online at www.sfgov.org/police.

UPPER NOE VALLEY CRIME LOG

Capt. Denis O'Leary's Incident Report for Oct. 16 to Nov. 15, 2008

10-16-08, 12:30 p.m., 1400 block of Sanchez: Attempted theft from building.

10-17-08, 8 a.m., 1400 block of Church: '03 Toyota truck recovered.

10-17-08, 10:15 a.m., 1500 block of Noe: '97 Honda Accord recovered.

10-20-08, 9 a.m., 200 block of 30th: Recovered vehicle.

10-21-08, 9 a.m., Noe & Day: Stolen truck.

10-22-08, 1 p.m., 400 block of 29th: Fraud case: theft by trickery.

10-22-08, 10 a.m., 300 block of Duncan: Auto burglary occurred between 10/21 and 10/22.

10-23-08, 11 p.m., Noe & Day: '94 Dodge van stolen.

10-24-08, 1:20 a.m., 500 block of Valley: Officers investigating cries for help found an intoxicated resident with a cut to his head. He was taken to SF General Hospital.

10-24-08, 9:45 p.m., Church & 30th: Bicycle theft. Bike locked to pole on 10/17 and found missing that same day. Late report.

10-28-08, 1:20 p.m., 200 block of 28th: Residential burglary: A resident heard a noise at his front door and found it damaged and ajar. He later discovered that a burglar had taken a laptop computer and a backpack.

10-29-08, 9 p.m., 500 block of Valley: Residential burglary.

10-31-08, 1 p.m., 200 block of 29th: Residential burglary: Occurred between 10/26 and 10/31. Entry via bathroom window. Clothing, currency, and jewelry taken.

11-03-08, 3:30 p.m., 300 block of 27th:

Home invasion robbery: A 64-year-old man arranged over the Internet to meet another man in order to perform chores. The second man arrived with an accomplice, and the two overpowered the victim and stole a safe from the home. The pair fled on foot. The first robber was described as a black male, 30 to 40 years old, 6' tall, 200 pounds, wearing dark clothing. The second robber was described as a white male with the same physical description.

11-04-08, 1:30 p.m., first block of Day: A 55-year-old Tenderloin District woman was detained for disturbing the peace.

11-04-08, midnight, 200 block of 30th: Armed Robbery: A 33-year-old Mission Terrace man left work and was approached by four men. One man produced a handgun, and the other three men rifled the victim's pockets, taking his belongings. The perpetrators fled in a gray four-door Japanese car. The gunman was described as a Latin male, 18 to 20 years old, 5'8" tall, 160 pounds, short black hair, wearing a black jacket, white T-shirt, and blue jeans. He was carrying a silver handgun. Late report (16 hours).

11-08-08, 12:34 a.m., 200 block of 30th: Missing person: Juvenile.

11-08-08, 8:45 p.m., 1700 block of Sanchez: Stolen truck.

11-10-08, 11 p.m., 1600 block of Church: Burglary.

11-11-08, 7:15 a.m., 300 block of Duncan: Assault.

11-15-08, 10:30 p.m., 800 block of Duncan: A 41-year-old Diamond Heights man was arrested for DUI (driving while intoxicated). Case #081225021.

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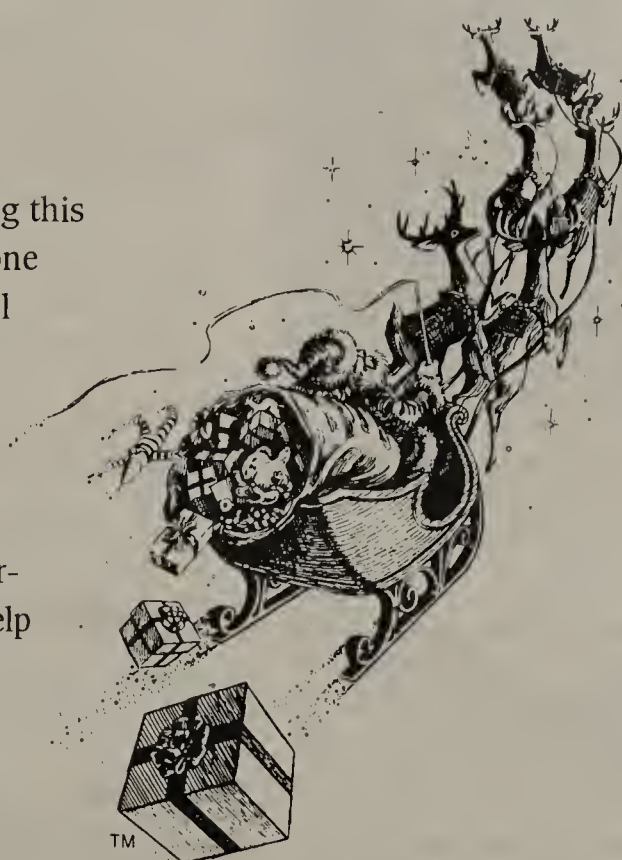
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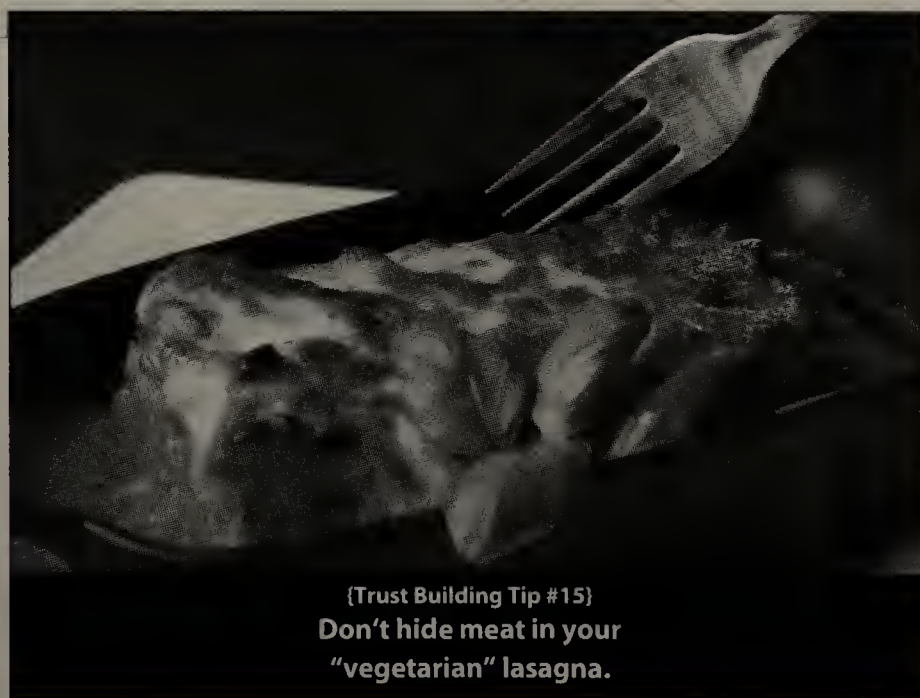
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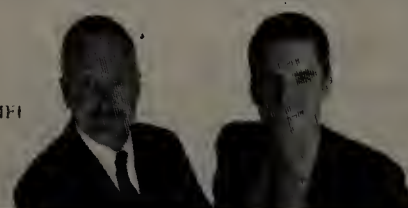
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SHORT TAKES

Higher Education

The Noe Valley satellite of City College of San Francisco, operating out of James Lick School, has grown this spring to include two new women's studies courses and a child development class.

When school starts Jan. 12, students will have an opportunity to study "Women Through Art History," examining the historical role of women as artists, patrons, and subjects of art; a child development class focusing on children with special needs; and a class that explores issues central to the development of lesbian identity, culture, and relationships.

Debra Porter, assistant to the dean of the Castro/Valencia Campus (as it's known officially), notes that the course offerings have increased in popularity each year since City College came to Lick in 2000.

"We've had a very successful relationship with the middle school and neighborhood," she says.

Porter says the campus has about 20 classes a night, four nights a week, with an average class size of 30 students.

In addition to the three new classes, the college will offer courses in writing, theater, health, and six foreign languages, including Mandarin and Russian. Classes are chosen based on demand, Porter says.

Registration begins Dec. 11 for the spring semester, which runs until May 21. Credit courses are \$20 per unit. Non-credit courses, such as tai chi, are free.

There is free parking for CCSF students in the lot behind the school, located at 1220 Noe Street between 25th and Clipper streets.

Applications, a schedule of classes, and online registration are available at www.ccsf.edu. Questions? Call 239-3127 during the day or 550-4500 evenings.

Toys R Noe

Drop off new unwrapped toys at Hill & Co. Real Estate's sunny Noe Valley location, and a San Francisco firefighter will help spread your holiday cheer to children in need.

The realty agency has been collecting toys and donations for the San Francisco Firefighters Toy Program for seven years, thanks to local Realtor Michelle Long and her father, retired Capt. Bill Long of the San Francisco Fire Department.

"The parents bring a wish list that their kids fill out to a local fire station in their neighborhood, and volunteer firefighters donate time to collecting toys, putting out bins, and wrapping presents," she says.

Not to be confused with the U.S. Marine Corp's Toys for Tots, the San Francisco program is run through the local firefighters' union. It began in 1949 when a handful of firefighters repaired cast-off broken toys and bicycles for a dozen needy children. Thanks to community support, widespread drop-off locations and an all-volunteer effort, last year the firefighters gave about 200,000 toys to about 40,000 children.

The firefighters also work with community organizations such as shelters for abused women and children, inner-city schools, pediatric hospital wards, and neighborhood groups to distribute gifts.

Long's father and grandfather were born and bred in Noe Valley and the nearby Mission District, and it was she who found the building for Hill two years ago. Last year, the bins overflowed with donations, and the realty agency also made a cash donation to the program, she says.

Through Dec. 18, gifts appropriate for tots to teenagers can be dropped into the red barrel at Hill & Co. at 3899 24th

Street. You can also leave toys at any firehouse. For more information, to volunteer, or to make a donation, call 777-0440.

Meet Santa at the Stroll

If you shop Noe Valley at the third annual Noel Stroll on Saturday, Dec. 13, from 5 to 9 p.m., you can scoop up holiday discounts while enjoying festive libations, live holiday music, finger foods, and a sit with Santa.

Hosted by the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association, the stroll along 24th Street—and Castro Street and Church Street—is a fun community event, says association co-president Gwen Sanderson, owner of Video Wave on Castro Street.

The stores will be strung with white lights, a caroling group will sing holiday songs, and a roving musician will stroll the street while playing guitar. Noe Nest owner Sheila Ash will serve latkes from the sidewalk, and shops will offer wine, spiced cider, cocoa, and goodies to eat. Both Qoio, at 24th and Noe, and When Modern Was on Church Street will host holiday parties that evening.

"It's a holiday mingling on the street," says Sanderson.

This year, strollers will have three chances to hear a reading of a Christmas story by actor Emmanuel Williams. Williams will share the Dylan Thomas' classic *A Child's Christmas in Wales* at Cover to Cover Booksellers, 1307 Castro Street, at 5:30 p.m., and then read it once more at Fima Photography, 1414 Castro Street, at 6:30 p.m. Next, he will perform Truman Capote's *A Christmas Memory*, at 7:30 p.m. at When Modern Was, 1504 Church Street near 27th Street.

Santa and his Noe Valley elves will be available for photos and holiday wishes from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and again from 5 to 8 p.m., at Zephyr Real Estate, 4040 24th Street.

Though the event is uniquely Noe Valley—boutique shopping, music, and food—Sanderson hopes residents from other neighborhoods will come, too.

"We really want to show the city what the neighborhood is about during the holidays."

For more information, go to www.noel-stroll.com or e-mail info@noevalleymerchants.com.

Food Is the Gift of Love

The San Francisco Food Bank makes helping hungry people easy this year by sponsoring food drive events throughout the holiday season.

San Francisco businesses, as well as local residents, are participating in this worthy effort.

Shoppers can stock up on holiday food at Whole Foods Market on Tuesday, Dec. 9. Five percent of sales that day will go to the food bank.

Shoppers who enroll in Macy's "Thanks for Sharing" program, for a \$25 fee, will receive a 10 percent rebate on holiday purchases. Macy's will donate a portion of the fee to the food bank.

Closer to Noe Valley, the Elbo Room at 647 Valencia Street will host a night of music to benefit the food bank on Dec. 17 from 8:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. Pirate Radio, the Burning Embers, the Earl Brothers, and Bob Harp will play. Tickets cost \$6 to \$10 and will be available at the door.

The food bank says non-perishables can be dropped off at grocery stores and many San Francisco schools. (Lucky Stores in San Francisco has pre-packed grocery bags with the most essential supplies, so buyers don't have to search for them individually.)

Other drop-off locations include Bethel Lutheran Church, 2525 Alemany Boulevard in Glen Park, and St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 101 Gold Mine Drive in Diamond Heights.

The number of families unable to make

Of Pigs and Presidents

Want to get your kids interested in U.S. presidents (if they're not already, with Barack Obama's upcoming inauguration)? Take a look at *Rhyme*, a new picture book written by Dolores Street resident William Marks.

Colorfully illustrated by North Beach artist Erin Gennow, *Rhyme* follows the political career of a pig named Rhyme who is elected to the Sty Council in his town of Muck. His campaign slogan is "Dirt doesn't hurt."

Why the name Rhyme? Because he only speaks in rhyme: "My fellow pigs: Here I stand, looking out upon our land. What a town that we call home—there is no better place to roam! I will help, and you can too—ask not what Muck can do for you. Living here is our good luck. Ask what you can do for Muck!"

If that stirring speech seems familiar, it's because the inspiration is President John F. Kennedy, who said, "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country," in his 1961 inaugural address. The book is filled with knockoffs of other famous speeches, from Lou Gehrig's Yankee Stadium farewell speech to Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, and the authentic quotes are included at the back. There are also puns and witticisms that 3- to 8-year-olds as well as grown-ups will groan over, such as "Penator Ulysses S. Grunt" and "Al Boar."

Besides a literary career, Marks has a "geeky finance job," meaning he's a financial analyst. He also is married with three children. He started MPC Press International in 1990, to publish his first book *No More Mac and Cheese: A Bachelor's Guide to Cooking with Ease*. In 2003, he published his first children's book, *Lawrence the Laughing Cookie Jar*. His newest, *Rhyme*, is available at city bookstores, including Cover to Cover Booksellers. To find out more about the book, go to www.mpcpress.com.

—Olivia Boler

ends meet has grown this year due to rising food costs and the financial crisis, according to Marguerite Nowak, the food bank's advocacy and education manager.

The San Francisco Food Bank distributes enough food to serve 66,000 meals a day. To learn more, call 282-1900 or visit www.sffoodbank.org.

J.D. Souther and Ramblin' Jack Headline Music Series

This year's Noe Valley Music Series holiday lineup includes satirical songs and a rare appearance by J.D. Souther, who helped form the Eagles and the band's California country-rock sound.

Popular songwriter Roy Zimmerman, will perform "PeaceNick" Saturday, Dec. 6, at 8:15 p.m. Described as "pacifist-humanist-seasonal" satire, Zimmerman's music riffs on everything from unwrapping presents to the wrap-up of the Bush administration. Tickets cost \$15 in advance and \$17 at the door.

On Saturday, Dec. 13, J.D. Souther makes a rare appearance after a 25-year hiatus from performing. Souther co-wrote some of the Eagles' most famous songs, like "New Kid in Town" and "Best of My Love." He has written songs for the likes of Linda Ronstadt, Roy Orbison,

and the Dixie Chicks, among many others. A performer, too, Souther formed the Souther Hillman Furay Band with Poco's Richie Furay and the Byrds' Chris Hillman, but he left the stage in 1985. April Smith, whose witty retro pop music has appeared on MTV television shows, will open for Souther at 8:15 p.m. Tickets cost \$25 for this double performance.

Finally, Ramblin' Jack Elliott starts the new year on Saturday, Jan. 3. The part-time cowboy, truck driver, and pilot is a full-time musician whose style influenced a young Bob Dylan.

Elliott has roamed the country since the '60s, putting humorous storytelling lyrics to the beats of country, blues, bluegrass, and folk music. He often accompanies himself on harmonica. Tickets cost \$20 in advance and \$22 at the door.

Advance tickets for Noe Valley Music Series performances can be purchased at Streetlight Records on 24th Street. All shows are at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez Street. For more information, call 454-5238 or visit www.noevalleymusicseries.com.

This month's Short Takes were written by Heather World.

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38986	Serving Children/Special Needs	Th	6:15–9:45 p.m.	102
38897	Lesbian/Gay Culture & Society	Th	6:30–9:30 p.m.	203
39019	Issues in the Lesbian Community	T	6:30–9:30 p.m.	102

For more information call 415.239.3127 or visit www.ccsf.edu



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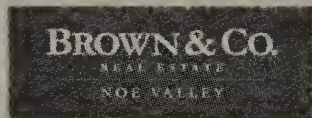
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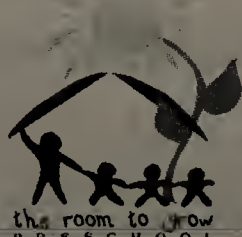
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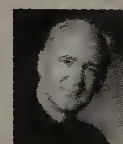
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Photo by Pamela Gerard

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Dec. 6** Roy Zimmerman

8:15 p.m.

**Sat.
Dec. 13** J.D. Souther (only Bay Area Concert!) plus April Smith

8:15 p.m.

**Sat.
Jan. 3** Ramblin' Jack Elliott

8:15 p.m.

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Accent on Flowers	Mercedes Garrido	Morena Montalvo	Stanton Family
AcroSports	Tom Gilleran	Montes Familia	Dr. Leonard Stein
Adventure Cat Sailing	Gilroy Gardens Park	Guillermo Morales	Ann Sullivan
Jill Alcantar	Glen Park Dental	Leticia Morales	St. Paul's Athletic Board
Jose & Lucu Alfaro	Goat Hill Pizza	Carol Morgan	St. Paul's Parent Group
Alice's Restaurant	Go Kart Racers	Kamala Mostert	St. Paul's School
Sonia Alvarado	Golden Gate Glass	Myriam Munguia	St. Paul's School of Religion
Maria Alvarenga	Mirror	Anita Murillo	Joan Strachan
Anchor Brewing Co.	Orlando Gonzales	Carlos Murillo	Sugar Bowl Ski Resort
Linda Annuzzi	Tina Gonzales	John Murphy	Mary Tan
Apron Strings Cooking Schl.	Great Haircuts	Deacon Jim Myers	Gary & Lisa Taormina
Rudy Arguello	Joe Greger	Navarretes Black Belt Academy	Terra Mia Ceramic Studio
Aquarium by the Bay	Guittard Chocolate Co.	Nelligan Family	Toast Eatery
Asian Art Museum	Hall Realty	Nibbi Brothers Construction	Sonia Tobias
Eda Ballesteros	Hanson Family Law Group	Noe Valley Bakery	Toscana Gardens
Baskin-Robbins	Ted & Judith Heimer	Noe Valley Cyclery	Ruth Tortorelli
Bay Area Discovery Museum	Hamano Sushi	Noe Valley Video	Trader Joes
Berkeley Rep Theater	Hearing & Low Vision Solutions	Frank & Lois Noonan	Train Town
Bi-Rite Market	John & Eloice Helms	Mary & Frank O'Rourke	Trejo y Familia
Olga Blancó	Consuelo Hernandez	Anne & Dave O'Shea	Tuggey's Hardware
Bianca Bran	Marta Hernandez	Katy O'Shea	Twin Peaks Pizza
Rachel & Scott Brown	Johanna Herrera	Oakland Art Museum	Tyger's Coffee Shop
Shawn & Michele Bulen	Marilyn Highlander Pool	Oakland Athletics	United Irish Cultural Center
Cache Creek Casino	Hiller Aviation Museum	Familia Obregon	Marjorie Vaccarezza
Café Bello'	Rosa Ibarra	Barbara J. Opperman	Joseph & Maria Vaccaro
Café XO	Ice Center of San Mateo	Franklin T. Opperman	Lucy Vaquerano
Cal Performances	Incanto Restaurant	Ortiz y Familia	Mauricio & Lupita Vasquez
California Academy of Sciences	Inn at Oyster Point	Paramount's Great America	Maria Vella
Evelyn Campos	Jacqueline's Hair Place	Pasta Pomodoro	Tere Vela
Canandrua Wine Co., Lodi	Jet International Travel	Patio Espanol	Pancho Villa
Marta Carvajal	Jimenez Family	Andy Pelligrini	Elsa Vides
Alba Castillo	Joe's of Westlake	Nina Pelligrini	Haydee Villatoro
Centered Body Pilates	Kaufer's Religious Supply	Irene Pena	Juan Villatoro
Chabot Space & Science Museum	KQED Tours	Myrna Pena	Vido Wave
Chenery Park Restaurant	Dan Kelly	Norma Perez	Mary Wachowicz
Cheese Boutique	Margaret Kottlanger	Pet Camp	Walgreens
Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose	KTVU Channel 2	Petrified Forest	White Rocket Wine Co.
Children's Fairyland	Yolanda Lacayo	Linda Petrini	Whitehall Winery
Chloe's Cafe	La Ciccica Restaurant	Pinkies Nail Salon	Whoop Inc.
Chocolate Covered Catherine Chung	Lakeside Cafe	Rainbow Grocery Coop	Winchester Mystery House
Club Latino	Lakeside Family Chiropractic	Regent Thai Restaurant	Women of St. Paul's
Cole Hardware	La Petite Baleen Swin, Inc.	Howard Reinstein / Prudential	Yerba Buena Skating Center
Common Scents	Bob & Patti Lazzaretto	Mercedes Robles	Yzinn Nail Club
Eva Corrales	Gladys Lazzarini	Maria Inez Rodriguez	Roberto Zaldana
Cover to Cover	Elodia Leucumi	Jamie Romero	
Joe & Anne Crawford	Cathy Lewis	Olga Romero	
Sr. Ann Cronin	Rosrgentina Lezcano	Steve Rouse	
Crystal Spings Golf	Carlos Lima	Richard & Stephanie	
Jacqueline Lytle Curran	Lisa Violette Designs	Rugg	
Jack Curtin	Littlest Angels Preschool	Joan Russo	
DeYoung Museum	Carmen Lopez	Tamsen Salvador	
Diandis Bakery	Esperanza Lopez	Safeway	
Pi Pietro Todd Salon	Miriam Lopez	San Francisco Ballet	
Divisadero Car Wash	Reina Lopez	San Francisco 49ers	
Marie Doherty	Lovejoy's Tea Room	San Francisco Giants	
DolphinSmile Studio	Terrell Lloyd	San Francisco POA	
Drewe's Bros. Meats	Photography	Dina Santana	
Sandy & Jim Driscoll	Lucky Chances	Patricia Saraceni	
The Dubliner Bar	Lynn Antiques & Beautiful Things	Rosa Scartin	
Duggan's Serra Mortuary	Evelyn Magarin	Annette Schubert	
Duggan Welch Family	Juan Magarin	Scoma's Restaurant	
Driscoll's & Sullivan	Vickie Majoric	SFMOMA	
Exploratorium	Malibu Grand Prix	SF Zoo	
Eye Q Optometry	Gerry & Nancy Mannion	Wayne Schaffnit & Paula Caretto	
Fine Arts Museums	Isabel Marengo	Sea Bowl	
Fima Photography	Martha Bros. Coffee	See's Candies	
Marilyn Ferrucci	McLoughlin Family	Mary Seffens	
Fr. Mario Farana	Alba Mejia y Familia	Serra Bowl	
Enedina Flores	Men of St. Paul's	Simply Uniform	
Juana Flores	Michael Manteuffel, DN	Six Flags Magic Mountain	
Angela Fonda	Mission Cliffs Climb Gym	Six Flags Marine World	
	Mitchell's Ice Cream	Small Frys	
		Hilda Solis	
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STORE TREK

By Lorraine Sanders

Sore Trek is a regular Noe Valley Voice feature, profiling new shops and businesses in the neighborhood. This month, we introduce a bookstore that popped up on Cesar Chavez a couple of weeks before Thanksgiving.

OMNIVORE BOOKS ON FOOD
3885A Cesar Chavez Street
at Church Street
415-282-4712
www.omnivorebooks.com

We omnivores (well, herbivores too) are facing plenty of dilemmas these days. Just ask author Michael Pollan. But now we have another one on our plate: What cookbook should we pluck from the hundreds lining the shelves at Noe Valley's newest bookstore?

Omnivore Books on Food, with 1,800 books to feast your eyes upon, opened Nov. 8 in the breadbox-sized space that was once a butcher shop near the corner of Cesar Chavez and Church streets. The cheerful, freshly remodeled store, featuring equal measures of new and antiquarian books, is the creation of Celia Sack (who is also co-owner with partner Paula Harris of the Noe Valley Pet Company next door).

Reflecting Sack's passion for both cookbooks and collectibles, the shop showcases contemporary titles like Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's *The River Cottage Cookbook* and David Tanis' *A Platter of Figs* alongside antique and vintage volumes, such as *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* by French chef Julia Child.

"The connection of the old and new—how traditions are passed down through the generations—that just made so much sense to me," says Sack, a rare books specialist who has worked for both Christie's in New York and the Pacific Book Auction in San Francisco.

Sack thinks her shop will hit the spot in Noe Valley, because of the "large number of people, like me, who love to cook and who love great food. We've got a great meat market—Drewes—and great restaurants like Incanto and La Ciccia. Church Street is becoming known as a sort of gourmet food corridor," she adds.

Though Omnivore is for everything-

eaters, it likely will hold the most appeal for those with discriminating tastes. The store recently sold a 1948 copy of Hugh Corley's *Organic Farming* (\$75), a book that Michael Pollan gives special billing in *The Omnivore's Dilemma* (available at the store as well). You can also pick up an out-of-print *How America Eats*, Clementine Paddleford's 1960 survey of regional American culinary traditions from the mid-20th century.

Other titles are more whimsical. *Fancy Ices*, an 1894 cookbook authored by Mrs. A. B. Marshall, with a sticker price of \$600, chronicles the London cooking school founder's rich knowledge of ice creams, bombes, and frozen delicacies quite admired in Victorian times.

The new books are what Sack considers "books I can really stand behind, that are well-written, easy to use." Straight-forward cooking techniques come courtesy of titles like *The Art of Simple Food* by Alice Waters and Mark Bittman's culinary tome *How to Cook Everything*.

But don't think Omnivore is just for diehard foodies. The shop stocks many "old reliables," like the *Fanny Farmer Cookbook* and Irma Rombauer's *Joy of Cooking*, now out in a 75th anniversary edition, \$35.

The store also carries books on cooking for, and with, children. Sack suggests *Pretend Soup* by Mollie Katzen, author of the Moosewood cookbook series. "It's an adorable book, well-illustrated for kids—a great way for kids to learn how to cook."

Books, which are neatly arranged by subject, run anywhere from \$10 to \$700. However, most new ones are in the \$20 to \$40 range.

If you're not sure what kind of cookbook you're looking for, just ask. "I love giving advice," says Sack, who enjoys testing recipes in her home kitchen on Douglass Street.

To perk up the neighborhood's palate, Sack has arranged for a series of author and chef visits to the store. This month, her lineup includes, among others, Eric Ripert, chef of New York's three-star restaurant Le Bernardin (Dec. 11, 5 p.m.); *American Cheeses* author Clark Wolf, accompanied by Soyoung Scanlan of Andante Dairy (Dec. 13, 2 p.m.); and Andrea Nguyen, author of *Into the Vietnamese Kitchen* (Dec. 17, 5 p.m.). For descriptions of all six events, see the *Voice* calendar or go to www.omnivorebooks.com.

Omnivore Books on Food is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and on Sundays, noon to 5 p.m., throughout the holiday season. ■



Celia Sack displays a mouth-watering array of cookbooks at her Omnivore Books on Food. She'll also host six chef-author visits in December.
Photo by Pamela Gerard



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— 5 star review of The Noe Valley Clinic posted by Lashanda G. of San Francisco on Yelp.com

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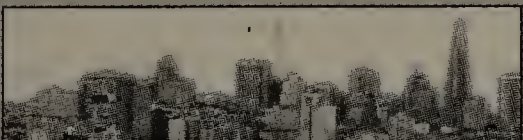
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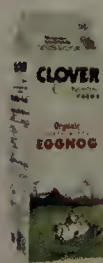
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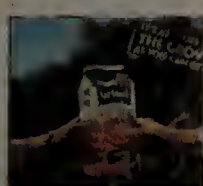
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DECEMBER/JANUARY

Dec. 1-31: OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS meets Monday through Saturday, 7 to 8 am. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317.

Dec. 1-31: Learn the wish lists of La Casa des las Madres clients or how to "ADOPT a family" this holiday season, by calling Valerie Labanca at 503-0500 or valerie@lacasa.org. 1663 Mission, Suite 225. www.lacasadelasmadres.org

Dec. 1-Jan. 2: Children and their caregivers are invited to KIDS GYM at the Upper Noe Rec Center. Mon.-Fri., 10-11:30 am. Enjoy the Music Man on Mon., 10:30 am; Wed., 11 am. Oay & Sanchez. 695-5011.

Dec. 1-Jan. 30: Noe Valley SENIOR CENTER serves hot lunches for people over 60, weekdays at 12:30 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 648-1030.

Dec. 2, 9, 16 & 22: The Instituto Italiano di Cultura celebrates the 150th anniversary of Puccini's birth with free video screenings of his OPERAS. 6:30 pm. 425 Washington, Suite 200. 788-7142.

Dec. 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30: Chris Sequeira gives a beginners TAI CHI class Tuesdays, 6 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. Register. 773-8185 or 650-756-6857.

Dec. 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30: Sing along with Patrick Sosa at Phoenix Books' Tuesday-morning STORY HOUR, for newborns to age 4. 10 am. 3850 24th. 821-3477.

Dec. 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30: Kadampa Buddhist Temple holds MEDITATION on Tuesdays. 7-8:30 pm. 3324 17th. 503-1187.

Dec. 2, 16, 23 & 30: The Noe Valley Library sponsors LAPSITS, 10:15 to 10:40 am, and preschool STORY TIME, 11 to 11:30 am. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; www.slpl.org.

Dec. 2 & Jan. 6: The SPCA offers a free PET LOSS support group. 7:30-9 pm. 243 Alabama. 554-3050.

Dec. 2-31 & Jan. 6-28: LANGO holds weekly classes in Tot/Parent (Mon., 10 am) and Preschooler SPANISH (Tues., 2 pm; Wed., 3 pm) at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317; www.langokids.com.

Dec. 3-20: Little Tree Gallery hosts an ART SHOW, "The Dissemblers," featuring Callyann Casteel, Maeghan Reid, and Lyla Rose. Wed.-Fri., 3-6 pm; Sat., noon-6 pm. 3412 22nd. 643-4929.

Dec. 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31: Mobu Studio's Pal-ersize Adventures in Fitness presents PAL TIME-4-TOTS, a class to practice motor skills for mommies and tots age 18 months

to 3 years. 9-9:40 am. 1605 Church. 550-PALS.

Dec. 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31: Eureka Valley Library's Wednesday LAPSIT, for newborns to age 3, begins at 3 pm; an afternoon story time for ages 3 to 5 starts at 3:30 pm. Tiny Tots Room, 100 Collingwood. 557-4353.

Dec. 3-Jan. 28: The Upper Noe SENIORS group meets on Wednesdays for socializing and bingo. Noon-3:30 pm. Upper Noe Rec Center, Day & Sanchez. 970-8061.

Dec. 3-31 & Jan. 7-29: Maria Tam teaches a new YIJIN TAI CHI class at Upper Noe Rec Center on Wednesdays and Fridays. 7-8:30 pm. Oay & Sanchez. 828-9436.

Dec. 4, 11 & 18: A Thursday STROLLER WALK starts at Holey Bagel at 11 am and rolls through Noe and the Castro. 3872 24th. www.noestrolls.com.

Dec. 4-20: The Victoria Theatre presents MOLIERE's satiric comedy *George Dandin*. Thurs.-Sat., 8 pm. 2961 16th. 863-7576.

Dec. 4-21: Theatre Rhinoceros stages "The Rhino Christmas Panto," a MUSICAL spoof in which a "fairy" reveals the meaning of Christmas. Wed.-Sat., 8 pm; Sun., 3 or 7 pm. 2926 16th. 861-5079; www.TheRhino.org.

Dec. 4-30: Fifty24SF Gallery exhibits "Ghosts of the BARBARY COAST" by Jeremy Fish. Reception Dec. 4, 7-9:30 pm; Tues.-Sun., noon-6 pm. 248 Fillmore. 252-9144.

Dec. 5-7: Fogbelt Studio's 16th annual Holiday Arts & CRAFTS SALE features items by 25 local artists. Fri., noon-8 pm; Sat., 10 am-6 pm; Sun., noon-6 pm. 2528 25th Ave. 244-8402; www.fogbeltstudio.com.

Dec. 5, 12, 19 & 26: CLARE tells tales for children at Cover to Cover's Friday mornings, 10:30 am. 1307 Castro. 282-8080.

Dec. 5, 12, 19 & 26: Bird & Beckett bookstore hosts CHILDREN'S STORY TIME Friday mornings at 11 am. 653 Chenery. 586-3733.

Dec. 5, 12, 19 & 26: CHESS CLUB at the Excelsior Branch Library (ages 6 and older) runs from 3:30 to 5:30 pm. 4400 Mission. 355-2868.

Dec. 5, 12, 19 & 26; Jan. 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30: Yell "BINGO!" at St. Paul's Friday nights at 7 pm (doors open at 5 pm). Parish Hall, 221 Valley. 648-7538.

Dec. 5-30 The HOLIDAY ART SALE at Creativity Explored includes masks, T-shirts, painting, and sculpture. Dec. 5, 6-9 pm; Dec. 6 & 7, 1-6 pm; regular hours are Mon.-Wed. and Fri., 10 am-3 pm; Thurs., 11 am-7 pm; Sat., 1-6 pm. 3245 16th. 863-2108.

Dec. 6 & Feb. 2: The Swinging GUITARS of Tom Huber and Misisipi Mike (8:30 am) and Failure to Disperse (10:30 am) play the Farmers' Market. 24th & Vicksburg. 248-1332; www.noevalleyfarmersmarket.com.

Dec. 6: SF School holds the annual eighth-grade YARO SALE in the parking lot of Noe Valley Pediatrics at 24th & Dolores. 8:30 am-3 pm. Rain date Dec. 13. 641-7146.

Dec. 6: See an array of gifts, food, and ornaments at the 25th annual Swedish Christmas FAIR. 9 am-4 pm. St. Mary's, 1111 Gough. www.swea.org/sanfrancisco.

Dec. 6: The Golden Gate Park Senior Center offers jewelry, ceramics, and other handmade art at its Holiday CRAFT SHOW. 10 am-2 pm. 6101 Fulton. 666-7015.

Dec. 6: Photographer Josie Iselin brings *Heart Stories* and her other books and prints to Kitchen Table Studio's HOLIDAY FAIR. 10 am-6 pm. St. Teresa's, 19th & Connecticut. www.josieiselin.com.

Dec. 6: The authors of *Organic Marin* discuss their philosophy of food at Omnivore Books. 2-3:30 pm. 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; www.omnivorebooks.com.

Dec. 6: Roy Zimmerman and Stevie Coyle perform a holiday PEACENICK CONCERT. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 454-5238; www.noevalleymusicseries.com.

Dec. 6 & 7: The Women's Building's 30th annual Celebration of CRAFTSWOMEN offers crafts, music, and food. Herbst Pavilion at Ft. Mason, Buchanan & Marina. 10 am to 5 pm on two weekends. 248-1373; www.celebrationofcraftswomen.org.

Dec. 6 & 7: The SF Choral Society performs J.S. Bach's Christmas ORATORIO at St. Paul's Church. Sat., 8 pm; Sun., 7:30 pm. 221 Valley. www.cityboxoffice.com; www.slchoral.org.

Dec. 6, 13 & 20: The Greening of GUERRERO continues; help plant the center median on Guerrero between 21st and 22nd

(Dec. 6), 20th and 21st (Dec. 13), and 22nd and 23rd (Dec. 20). 9 am-1 pm. 285-8188; www.sanjoseguerrero.com.

Dec. 6-22: Young Performers Theatre presents J.M. Barrie's classic *Peter Pan*. Sat. & Sun., 1 & 3:30 pm; also Mon., Dec. 22. Fort Mason Building C, Room 300. 346-5550; www.ypt.org.

Dec. 6-Jan. 18: Agelio Batle exhibits two- and three-dimensional work at ArtZone 461 Gallery. Reception Dec. 6, 5-8 pm. 461 Valencia. 441-8680.



Sixties icon Ramblin' Jack Elliott plays cowboy guitar at the Noe Valley Music Series Jan. 3.

Dec. 7: Sharon Art Studio holds its Winter Holiday POTTERY and Craft Sale. 11 am-5 pm. Golden Gate Park next to the Children's Playground. 753-7005.

Dec. 7: The SF Bicycle Coalition's WINTER-FEST fundraiser features an art show and auction. 6-10:30 pm. SomArts Gallery, 934 Brannan. 431-BIKE; www.slbike.org.

Dec. 7, 14, 21 & 28; Jan. 4, 11, 18 & 25: The "Which Way West?" live jazz SHOWS continue at Bird & Beckett, 4:30 pm. 653 Chenery. 586-3733; www.birdbeckett.com.

Dec. 7-29: David Hirata & Friends perform *MAGIC HOLIDAY* at the Marsh. 1 pm. Sat., Sun. & Mon., Dec. 22 & 29. 1062 Valencia. 641-0235; www.themarsh.org.

Dec. 7 & Jan. 4: Rocket DOG RESCUE has homeless dogs. Noon-4 pm. Zephyr Real Estate, 4040 24th. 642-4786.

Dec. 7 & 21, Jan. 4 & 18: SF City Guides leads free WALKING TOURS of Noe Valley on first and third Sundays through April. 1-3 pm. Meet at the Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 557-4266; www.slcityguides.org.

Dec. 9: Noe Valley Library shows FILMS for preschoolers, including *Pete's a Pizza*, at 10:15 and 11 am. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; www.slpl.org.

Dec. 9: The SF TREE OF HOPE lighting ceremony begins at 5:30 pm at City Hall.

Dec. 9: A RADAR READING hosted by Michelle Tea features Antonia Crane, Jillian Lauren, Kriss de Jong, and Ace Morgan. 6-7:30 pm. Main Library, 100 Larkin. www.slcb.org.

Dec. 9: Small Claims Management offers a FREE CLINIC on "How to Present a Case in Small Claims Court." 6 pm. 760 Market., Suite 1042. 693-9811.

Dec. 10: Brad Kintzer from Shartfen Berger Chocolate leads a HOT CHOCOLATE TASTING and presentation. 7-8:30 pm. SF Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum. 9th Ave. at Lincoln. 661-1316.

Dec. 11: Registration for spring semester classes at CITY COLLEGE, including those held at James Lick Middle School, begins. 239-3127; www.ccsf.edu.

Dec. 11: U.S. Poet Laureate Kay Ryan reads from her work, and reps from the LIBRARY OF CONGRESS explain their new website, www.myLOC.gov. 10 am-noon. Main Library, 100 Larkin. 557-4400; slpl.lib.ca.us.

Dec. 11: CHEF Eric Ripert from Le Bernardin in New York City discusses and signs *On the Line* at Omnivore Books. 5-6 pm. 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; www.omnivorebooks.com.

Dec. 11: Marxist economic analyst Dr. Bob Price and socialist feminist Nancy Reiko Kato discuss "CAPITALISM'S MELTDOWN: A Left Perspective" at the Radical Women meeting. Dinner, 6:15 pm; program 7 pm. New Valencia Hall, 625 Larkin. 864-1278.

Dec. 11-20: Intersection for the Arts hosts the 2008 Hybrid FESTIVAL of New Works, including live music, hip-hop, and spoken word. Thurs.-Sat., 8 pm. 446 Valencia. 626-3311; www.theintersection.org.

Dec. 12: Cindy Mushet and Maren Caruso talk about *The Art and Soul of BAKING*. 5-6 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; www.omnivorebooks.com.



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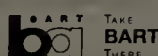
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CALENDAR

Dec. 12 & 13: The HOLIDAY FAIR at the SF Center for the Book features artist's journals, handmade cards and calendars. Fri., 6-8 pm; Sat., noon-5 pm. 300 De Haro. 565-0545.

Dec. 12-14: The third annual Circus Drag BURLESQUE Festival at CounterPulse begins at 8 pm. 1310 Mission. 1-800-838-3006.

Dec. 13: The Noe Valley Farmers' Market hosts MUSIC by the Faux Brummels (8:30 am) and They Call Me Lucky (10:30 am). 24th & Vicksburg. 248-1332. www.noevalleyfarmersmarket.com.

Dec. 13: The LEGO League Robotic Challenge features teams of middle school students from around the world, including the Randall RoboTects. 9:45 am-4:30 pm. Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way. 554-9600.

Dec. 13: CRAFTICON 3.0 at Modern Times Bookstore offers creative work for sale. Noon. 888 Valencia. 282-9246; www.mtbs.com.

Dec. 13: Clark Wolf discusses his new book, *American CHEESES*, at Omnivore Books. 2-3:30 pm. 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; www.omnivorebooks.com.

Dec. 13: SCRAP cosponsors a decorative tin box workshop for teens and adults at the Glen Park Library. 2-4 pm. 2825 Diamond. 337-4740.

Dec. 13: Friends of Dolores Park Playground hosts a Golden Shovel DEDICATION of the new playground, featuring holiday caroling with the SF City Chorus, beginning at 3:30 pm.

Dec. 13: Emmanuel Williams reads TRUMAN CAPOTE's *A Christmas Memory* at 7:30 pm, at the holiday party at When Modern Was. 4-9 pm. 1504 Church. 970-1030.

Dec. 13: 24th Street shops will be lively from 5 to 9 pm for the annual NDEL STROLL, featuring carolers, cocoa, wine and cheese, latkes, cider, and Santa (Zephyr Real Estate, 11 am-2 pm and 5-8 pm). Readings of Dylan Thomas' *Child's Christmas in Wales* will take place at Cover to Cover, 1307 Castro, 6:30 pm; and Fima Photography, 1414 Castro, 7:30 pm. www.noelstroll.com.

Dec. 13: Singer/songwriter J.D. SOUTHER, co-founder of the Eagles, performs at the Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry. 8:15 pm. 1021 Sanchez. 454-5238; www.noevalleymusicseries.com.

Dec. 13 & 14: AUDITIONS for Polyphnia Youth Choir, led by two former Kitka singers, are open to ages 11 to 19. Call 510-435-7844 for information.

Dec. 13 & Jan. 10: Meet local doulas and MIOWIVES at a second-Saturday event at Natural Resources. 2-4 pm. 1367 Valencia. 550-2611; www.naturalresources-sf.com.

Dec. 14: The Noe Valley Ministry hosts "The Animals Talk," a community Christmas PAGEANT especially for children. 10:30 am. 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317.

Dec. 14: Community Music Center's free HOLIDAY PARTY includes a performance of *Amahl and the Night Visitors* by the Ina Chalis Opera Ensemble, Christmas carols, and a visit from Santa. 11:30 am. 544 Capp. 826-8670; www.sfmcc.org.

Dec. 14: The SINGLETARIANS, age 45 and up, gather for a Christmas potluck with dancing. Bring an entree or salad, and a gift (\$10 or less). 2 pm. First Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin. 821-7865 or 922-3033.

Dec. 14: The Sisters of PERPETUAL INOULGENCE make a guest appearance at the monthly PFLAG support group meeting. 2-4:30 pm. St. Francis Lutheran Church, 152 Church. 921-8850.

Dec. 14: Noe Valley CHAMBER MUSIC presents a crossover jazz concert by Quartet San Francisco. 4 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 648-5236; www.nvcm.org.

Dec. 15: Lois Hoskins discusses surviving the Depression, and Prof. Barry Schutz offers insights on the State Department, at ODD MONDAYS at the Noe Valley Ministry. 7:30 pm; dinner Noe Valley Pizza, 5:30 pm (RSVP jlsender@webtv.net). 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317.

Dec. 17: Andrea Nguyen takes us *Into the VIETNAMESE KITCHEN* at Omnivore Books. 5-6:30 pm. 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; www.omnivorebooks.com.

Dec. 17: Plan what to do during the ECONOMIC depression at a free "Talks!" event at CounterPulse, 1310 Mission. 7:30 pm. 626-2060; www.counterpulse.org.

Dec. 17: A benefit for the SF FODD BANK features Pirate Radio, the Burning Embers, the Earl Brothers, and Bob Harp. 8:30 pm. Elbo Room, 647 Valencia. 552-7788.

Dec. 18: The Bernal Heights Library BDDK CLUB discusses Joyce Cary's *The Horse's Mouth*. 4 pm. 500 Cortland. 355-2810.

Dec. 18: Author MARIE SIMMONS talks

about *Things Cooks Love*. 5-6 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; www.omnivorebooks.com.

Dec. 19: BARRY GIFFORD reads *Memories from a Sinking Ship*, with Michael Parsons' jazz piano accompaniment. 8:30 pm. Bird & Beckett. 653 Chenery. 586-3733; www.bird-beckett.com.

Dec. 20: Jude (8:30 am) and Noe Valley Flutes (10:30 am) play the Noe Valley FARMERS' MARKET. 24th & Vicksburg. 248-1332; www.noevalleyfarmersmarket.com.

Dec. 20-25: Bring canned goods, turkeys, and gently used clothing, especially coats, to St. Anthony's annual curbside DONATION DRIVE. 8 am-6 pm weekdays; 9 am-3 pm weekend days. 121 Golden Gate. 592-2737; www.stanthony.org.

Dec. 21: The Paul Scheffert Trio plays at a free JAZZ VESPERs at the Noe Valley Ministry. 5-6 pm. Upper Hall, 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317; www.noevalleyministry.org.

Dec. 21: "A Night of Wonder" at Bethany United Methodist Church unfolds with CHRISTMAS MUSIC, carols, and bells. 6 pm. 1268 Sanchez. 647-8393.

Dec. 24: Noe Valley Ministry Presbyterian Church holds a Christmas Eve FAMILY SERVICE, with music, story, and a candle-lit circle. 5:30 pm. 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317.

Dec. 24: Bethany United Methodist Church hosts a CHRISTMAS EVE program for children at 5 pm and candlelight caroling at 8 pm. 1268 Sanchez. 647-8393.

Dec. 24: The SF Gay MEN'S CHORUS performs at the Castro Theatre. 5, 7 & 9 pm. 429 Castro. 621-6120; www.castrotheatre.com.

Dec. 28: Diane di Prima reads poems in memory of ROSETTA REITZ, founder of blues label Rosetta Records. 4:30-6:30 pm. Bird & Beckett. 653 Chenery. 586-3733; www.bird-beckett.com.

Dec. 29: The SF CHAMBER ORCHESTRA performs a free New Year's concert with jazz singer Amanda King. 7 pm. Herbst Theater, 401 Van Ness. 248-1640.

Dec. 31: The Joe Goode Performance Group presents "Small Experiments in SONG 7 DANCE." 9:30 pm-1 am. Brava Theater, 2789 24th. 561-6565.

Jan. 1-31: City Art Gallery displays ART by 30 members. Reception Jan. 2, 7-10 pm; Wed.-Sun., noon-9 pm. 828 Valencia. 970-9900; www.cityartgallery.com.

Jan. 3: RAMBLIN' JACK ELLIOTT performs at 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 454-5238; www.noevalleymusicseries.com.

Jan. 6, 13, 20 & 27: The SFSPCA Academy for Dog Trainers presents a lectures on DOG BEHAVIOR. 7-9 pm. 243 Alabama. Register at 554-3095 or www.sfspca.org.

Jan. 7-9: Noe Valley Ministry welcomes VOLUNTEERS (children included, over age 6) to three nights of serving the hungry at Interfaith Winter Shelter, St. Mark's Church, Gough & Geary. 5:30-7:30 pm. 282-2317.

Jan. 7, 14, 21 & 28: Eureka Valley Library's Wednesday BABY RHYME TIME, for newborns to 18 months, begins at 3 pm, a family story time for ages 2 to 5 starts at 3:30 pm. Tiny Tots Room, 100 Collingwood. 557-4353.

Jan. 11: The Cypress Quartet performs at Noe Valley CHAMBER MUSIC. 4 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 648-5236; www.nvcm.org.

Jan. 12: Jude (8:30 am) and They Call Me Lucky (10:30 am) play the Noe Valley FARMERS' MARKET. 24th & Vicksburg. 248-1332.

Jan. 15-21: The 14th annual Berlin & Beyond FILM FESTIVAL includes an appearance by director WIM WENDERS. Castro Theatre, 429 Castro. 621-6120; www.castrotheatre.com.

Jan. 16-18: Musical THEATRE Works students, grades 3-12, perform *The Sound of Music* at the Randall Theater. 7:30 pm; Sun. matinee, 1 pm. 199 Museum Way. 641-5988.

Jan. 17, 22, 24, 29 & 31: A workshop led by Nature Trip's Eddie Bartley on the WILD BIRDS of SF includes three Saturday field trips and two Thursday evening discussions. SF Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum. Preregistration required: 661-1316, ext. 400; www.sfbotanicalgarden.org.

Jan. 18: The free JAZZ VESPERs at the Noe Valley Ministry features jazz songstress Clairdee and accompanist Ken French. 5-6 pm. Upper Hall, 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317; www.noevalleyministry.org.

Jan. 19: The Noe Valley Farmers' Market hosts MUSIC by the Faux Brummels (8:30 am) and Oevil's Slide (10:30 am). 24th & Vicksburg. 248-1332. www.noevalleyfarmersmarket.com.

Jan. 19: The OOO MONOAYS series at the Noe Valley Ministry honors President-Elect Obama with a screening of film from his trip to Africa. 7:30 pm; dinner Noe Valley Pizza, 5:30 pm (RSVP jlsender@webtv.net). 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317.

Jan. 19: The "Down to a Science" LECTURE series continues at Atlas Café. 7-9 pm. 3049 20th. 648-1047; www.sciencecafe.org.

Jan. 23: Blair Kilpatrick introduces her new book, *Accordion Dreams: A Journey into Cajun and CREOLE MUSIC*. 7:30 pm. The Booksmith, 1644 Haight. 863-8688; www.booksmith.com.

Jan. 24: St. Paul's hosts FAMILY BINGO Night, featuring ice cream and lots of prizes. 6-8 pm. Parish Hall, 221 Valley. 648-7538.

Jan. 26: Deborah Crooks (8:30 am) and Sandy Ross (10:30 am) play MUSIC at the Farmers' Market. 24th & Vicksburg. 248-1332; www.noevalleyfarmersmarket.com.

Jan. 27: Guest speakers discuss the colorful history of our city at the monthly meeting of the SF HISTORY Association. 7 pm. St. Philip's Church, 725 Diamond. 750-9986; www.sanfranciscohistory.org.

Jan. 29: UPPER NOE Neighbors meet at 7:30 pm at the Upper Noe Rec Center, Day & Sanchez. 285-0473.

Jan. 29: You are invited to an OPEN HOUSE at Saint James School from 5 to 7 pm. 321 Fair Oaks between 24th and 25th. 647-8972. www.saintjamesst.org.

CALENDAR DEADLINE

Whew! We are on vacation for a month. So the next *Noe Valley Voice* will be the **February 2009** issue, appearing in *Noe Valley Feb.* 3. Mail calendar items by **Jan. 15** to calendar@noevalleyvoice.com or write the *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Note: Events in *Noe Valley* get preference, but we'll consider items from all over the city.

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Holiday Show

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EVENTS

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2008

THRS
DEC
4

MY BOMBAY KITCHEN • 5:00-6:00 PM • FREE
Niloufer King will discuss her book *MY BOMBAY KITCHEN* and will bring appetizers made in her kitchen!

SAT
DEC
6

ORGANIC MARIN • 2:00-3:30 PM • FREE
Join the authors of *ORGANIC MARIN* for a conversation about the organic food movement.

THRS
DEC
11

ON THE LINE • 5:00-6:30 PM • FREE
Eric Ripert will sign his new book, *ON THE LINE: Inside the World of Le Bernadin*.

FRI
DEC
12

THE ART AND SOUL OF BAKING • 5:00-6:00 PM
FREE • Veteran pastry chef Cindy Mushiet, author of *THE ART AND SOUL OF BAKING* will discuss and sign her book.

SAT
DEC
13

AMERICAN CHEESES • 2:00-3:30 PM • FREE
Clark Wolf will appear with Soyoung Scanlan of Andante Dairy to discuss Clark's new book, *AMERICAN CHEESES*.

WED
DEC
17

INTO THE VIETNAMESE KITCHEN • 5:00-6:30 PM
• FREE • Author Andrea Nguyen will discuss and sign her book, *INTO THE VIETNAMESE KITCHEN*.

THRS
DEC
18

THINGS COOKS LOVE • 5:00-6:00 PM • FREE
Marie Simmons will discuss and sign her book, *THINGS COOKS LOVE*.

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Holy Eucharist with Carols on Christmas Day at 11am

Holy Innocents

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and the Choir of St. Francis
Dr. David Schofield, Director
Free Admission. Donations Accepted

CHRISTMAS EVE
Carols, Choir and the Christchild
Wednesday, December 24, 10:30 PM

CHRISTMAS DAY
Christmas Worship, 11 AM

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Sunday, December 21 at 11:00 A.M.

A Night of Wonder
Carols, Bells, Instruments, and Christmas Music
Sunday, December 21 at 6:00 P.M.

A Child's Christmas
A Christmas Time for Children
Wednesday, December 24, 5:00 P.M.

Are We There Yet?
Carols and Candles
Wednesday, December 24, 8:00 P.M.

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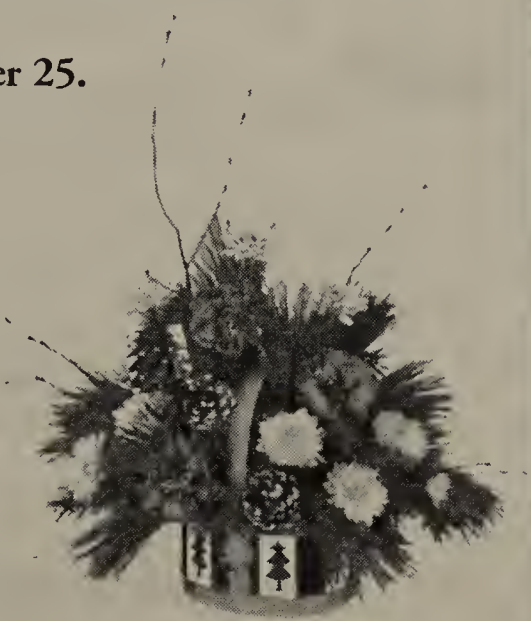
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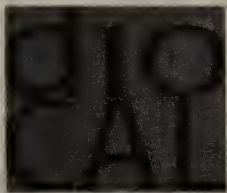


Holy Innocents

Dec. 24 6 pm Do-It-Yourself Christmas Pageant
10:30 pm Christmas Music, 11 pm Midnight Mass
Dec. 25 11 am Eucharist with Christmas Carols
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(415) 824-5142 www.holyinsf.org

St. John the Evangelist & El Buen Samaritano

Dec. 24 10:30 pm Carol Sing
11 pm Midnight Mass
Dec. 25 11 am Christmas Day Mass
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WITH US THE LOVE THAT IS CHRISTMAS.

Advent Communal Reconciliation

THURSDAY, DEC. 11

7:00 pm

Reconciliation (Confessions)

THURSDAY, DEC. 24

11:00 am – Noon

Christmas Eve Masses

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 24

4:30 pm — Family Mass with Children's Choir
8:00 pm — Mass in English with Adult Choir
12:00 Midnight – Bilingual Mass with Adult Choir

Christmas Day Masses

THURSDAY, DEC. 25

8:00 am, 9:15 am, and 5:00 pm

There will be no 10:45 or 12:15 pm Mass on December 25

New Year's Day Mass

THURSDAY, JAN. 1, 2009

9:15 am (English)

Merry Christmas, Joyeux Noel, Feliz Navidad,
Maligayang Pasko, Buon Natale

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CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2008



Christmas Eve, Wednesday, December 24

Confessions: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon

Vigil of Christmas

Children's / Family Mass: 5:00 p.m.
Christmas Carols: 9:30 p.m.
Evening Mass: 10:00 p.m.

Christmas Day, Thursday, December 25

Mass of the Lord's Nativity

Mass: 9:30 a.m.

December 28, Sunday

Feast of the Holy Family

Saturday Vigil, 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.



January 1, Thursday

Mary, Mother of God, World Day of Peace

Mass: 9:00 a.m.

January 4, Sunday

Epiphany of the Lord

Saturday Vigil 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

Traditional Christmas Music at all Masses
Join us, for the Nativity Celebration of our Lord...
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Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m. Childcare provided
Rev. Keenan C. Kelsey, Pastor

Christmas,
A Season of Joy and Love.
Come be Embraced
by the Spirit.

A Voice in the Wilderness

Advent Two: Sunday, December 7, 10:30 a.m.

Children's Christmas Pageant

A Community Event!

Advent Three: Sunday, December 14, 10:30 a.m.

Mary's Thoughts

Advent Four: Sunday, December 21, 10:30 a.m.
With special music and dancers

Seasonal Jazz Vespers

Advent Four: Sunday, December 21, 5 p.m.
The Paul Sheffert Trio

Christmas Eve

Wednesday, December 24, 5:30 p.m.
Family Worship: Special Music, Scripture and
Message, Circle of Candles

New Year's Eve, Wednesday, December 31, 7 p.m.

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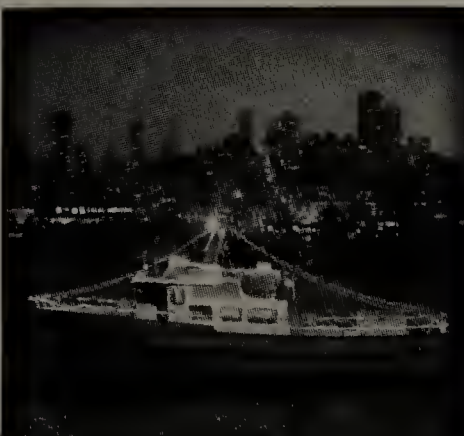
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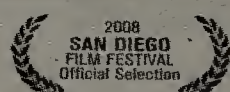
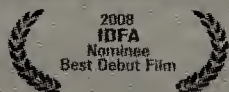
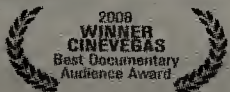
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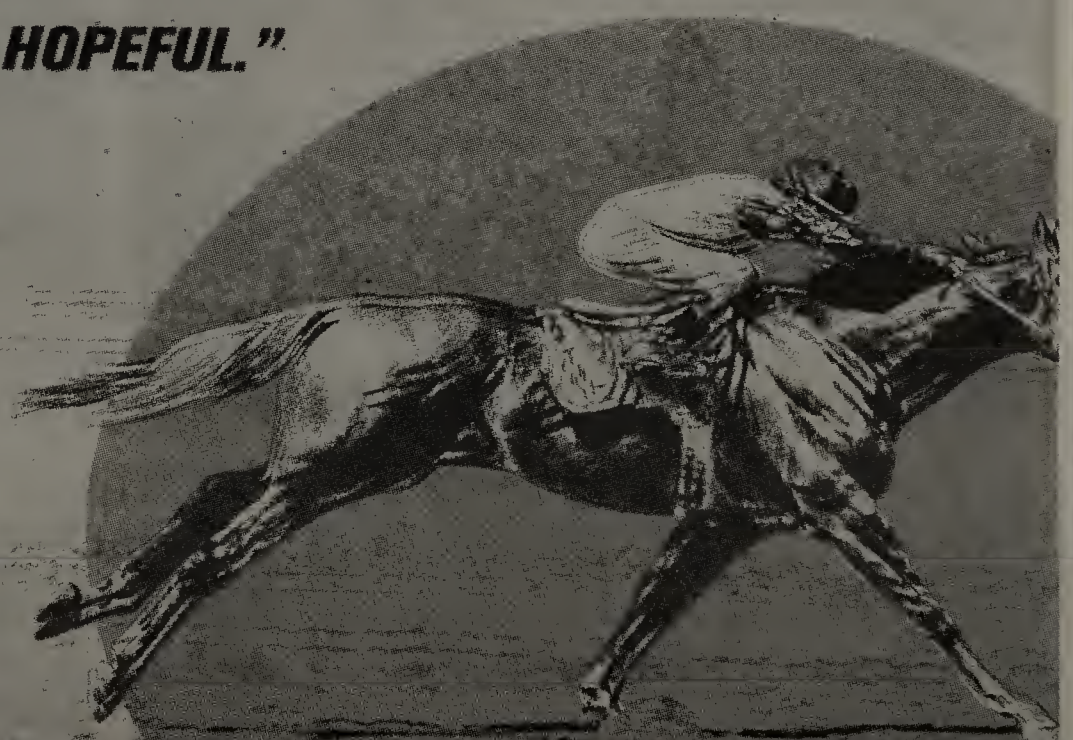
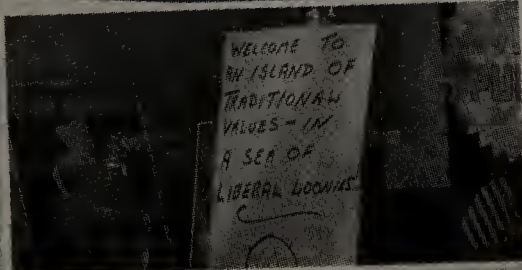
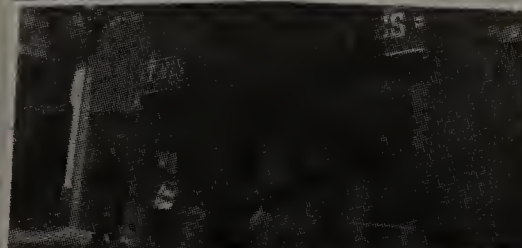
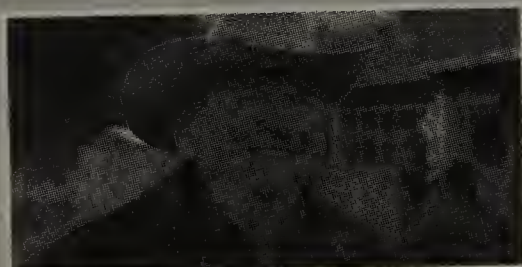


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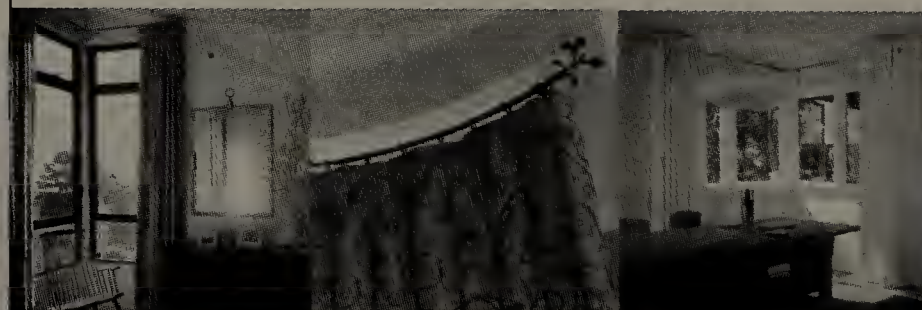
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Illustrated Reminiscences
by Florence Holub

Evolution: Better Late Than Never

Editor's Note: The Voice first published this essay, by our longtime correspondent Florence Holub, almost 14 years ago in the February 1995 issue. Since then, Florence and husband Leo Holub have continued their New Year's Eve no-driving policy, as well as their walks up 21st Street to the top of Sanchez Street Hill. And in January, Florence will celebrate her 90th birthday, most likely, she says, with a visit to the new Academy of Sciences.

On Jan. 1, 1995, when we arose early and looked out our window at the sleeping city, I could not help but remark to Leo how wonderful it was to face the day without a weary body or a champagne-induced headache.

We stopped celebrating New Year's Eve 30 years ago, after a harrowing journey across town following an evening with friends in the Westlake area. On that night we had driven back to Noe Valley through pea-soup fog, the kind that allowed only a few feet of visibility. Leo clenched the steering wheel and I held my breath, as the headlights of other automobiles—probably driven by inebriated revelers—loomed suddenly from the thick mist.

We finally arrived home safely, but vowed never again to venture out on such an accident-prone evening. And we have kept our promise, limiting our New Year's activity to visits with neighbors or watching the celebrations on television.

This New Year's Eve we fell asleep so early that only when the horns and noises of the city at midnight awakened us were we able to sleepily mutter to one another, "Happy New Year."

At the crack of dawn, we awoke alert, steady-handed, and able to attend to the task awaiting us: addressing our Christmas cards! Given the late date, we had to inscribe the blank inner page with a post-Christmas message, "Best Wishes for 1995."

We were midway through the process—and starting to feel pretty good about it—when we received a phone call from an old friend. She said that when she failed to get our Christmas card as usual in December, she had become concerned and was calling to find out if we were okay.

We reassured her that we were alive and well, and that she would soon receive our greeting.

Our card this year is a duotone reproduction of Leo's photograph of a misty eucalyptus grove, with one small solitary figure walking through it. We deposited these "Christmas" cards in the mailbox on Jan. 3.

Later in the month, on Jan. 25, I also had reason to celebrate, for this date marked another hurdle, my 76th birthday!

I expected to be doddering at this



The Holubs' 1994 Christmas card featured a wintry photo of eucalyptus trees taken by Leo Holub in 1962.

stage, but instead I am enjoying surprisingly good health, as well as an extremely interesting life. Perhaps the latter ensures the former, but I have also found additional measures that contribute to a feeling of well-being, which I will share with you.

On my 50th birthday, when I was beginning to feel every minute of it, some kind friends gave me a book that became my bible. It was a copy of Adele Davis' *Let's Eat Right to Keep Fit*. I followed her advice, and within a few weeks my vitality began to return. Ever since then, whenever an unwanted physical malady appears, I thumb through the worn pages and take steps to waylay the ailment!

I quickly learned that in addition to a balanced diet (long in green salads and short on sweets), a daily dose of vitamins helps a lot. Every morning with my granola, I swallow 1,000 milligrams of both E and C, as well as small amounts of A, D, and niacinamide, the morale builder. Also, at my age, calcium should be taken to prevent the bones from becoming porous and breakable. I get my quota by adding a couple of tablespoons of lowfat powdered milk to each cup of morning coffee.

In addition to taking vitamins, I exercise. About 10 years ago when my joints began to get creaky, I consulted a chiropractor who advised me that unless I began attending a regular exercise class, my muscles would begin to atrophy and my mobility would be seriously impaired.

At the same time, by coincidence, a friend urged me to join a class for seniors, conducted by a physical therapist at the Marshall Hale Therapeutic Center. There I learned gentle movements that strengthen the soft tissues supporting our bones. The exercises were so effective that I have felt no need for a chiropractor since.

Although the classes are no longer in session, I follow the exercise routine every morning. Before the first cup of coffee, I get down on the floor for half an hour, making the motions that enable me to climb the hills of Noe Valley.

Once I started taking better care of my body, I determined to give my mind a workout, too. Just by chance, I heard

about and took our youngest son, Eric, along with two of his friends, to the children's art classes at the de Young Museum in Golden Gate Park.

While the kids were busy, I discovered the art lectures for adults who were training to be docents for the museum's fine art collection. Long after the boys had outgrown their art classes, I continued with mine, broadening my view of the world by watching the history of civilization unfold in the galleries.

For me, becoming a museum docent was like traveling, but without the inconvenience or expense!

In the '80s, the de Young docents were invited to give tours at the nearby Academy of Sciences. In preparation for showing off the superb nature exhibits, we enrolled in various science courses taught at the museum.

During one lecture in connection with the Academy's "Life Through Time" exhibit, our resident anthropology curator, Dr. Linda Cordell, was talking about evolution and how it was continuing at that very moment. As an example, she mentioned that the children of this generation were not sprouting wisdom teeth like their parents had. Due to the refinement of foods, big grinding molars were no longer needed.

When I related this amazing fact to our grown sons, they said they were not a bit surprised—they had no wisdom teeth either!

Another helpful thing I learned in these courses was how to envision where humans fall on the vast timeline of evolution. Our science instructor told us to picture the Transamerica Pyramid, with the distance from the sidewalk to the top of the building representing 3.7 billion years. Then, place a Ritz cracker at the tip. That little wafer represents the short time that our species has been around!

Suspended from the ceiling in the entry lobby of the Academy of Sciences is an enormous skeleton of a gray whale. When I lead a tour here, I stand beneath it while telling the school children how fossil records show that the whale developed from a four-legged land mammal who went back to sea and used only his front limbs to plow through the water.

The whale's front legs grew powerful, while his rear legs dangled motionless behind him, growing weaker. Over millions of years, those unused legs shriveled to almost nothing.

Pointing up to the two small bones hanging where the legs once were, I remind the kids to "use it or lose it." That advice applies to the big kids too, as well as to little old ladies like myself!

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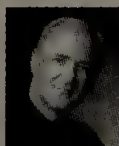
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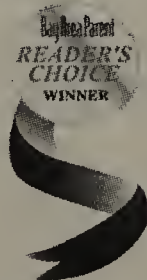
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More Mouths to Feed. Stephanie Scott (left) and Jen Caufield know they're sure to find a good snack at the Noe Valley Farmer's Market on 24th Street. Kids Breckin (left), Finley and Hayden Caufield all agree.

Photo by Pamela Gerard



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SCHOOL REPORT

Here's the latest from parents at two Noe Valley public schools: Fairmount Elementary on Chenery Street and Alvarado Elementary School on Douglass Street.

FAIRMOUNT

Raise a Glass to Environmental Education

The fourth- and fifth-grade students at Fairmount Elementary School are preparing for a February visit to Westminster Woods, a campsite nestled in 200 acres of redwood forest in western Sonoma County.

Every two years, the school loads the fourth- and fifth-graders onto a school bus and takes them up north to this mystical campground, where the children stay in cabins for two nights and spend three days exploring the surrounding area.

Students spend their days studying ecology, exploring the stream that runs through the camp, going tide-pooling at the Pacific Ocean six miles away, and taking team-building challenge courses. A highlight of the camp is a night hike, where counselors take the children out to listen and watch for wildlife and learn about astronomy.

Of course, this wonderful experience isn't free...and so...it's party time! And where is the favorite venue for parents to

hang out while they raise money to ensure a good education for their children? El Rio, of course!

The party—which is open to everyone, of course!—will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 17, from 5:30 to 9 p.m. at El Rio, 3158 Mission St. (a half-block southwest of Cesar Chavez). Not only will there be music, dancing outside in the cool night air, and drinks at the bar, there will also be raffle prizes and food donated by parents and local restaurants.

One of the party organizers, teacher Loren Chasse, is urging everyone to invite their friends. "In the past, we have had a blast while the donation jar fills up magically in the corner! And let's get a certain ex-principal back on the dance floor," Chasse says, referring, of course, to that dancing star and former principal Karling Aguilera-Fort.

Teacher Links Kids with Earthwatch

Loren Chasse's passion for education goes beyond taking students to Westminster Woods. He has just received a fellowship from Earthwatch Institute (www.earthwatch.org), an organization that works with teachers and students on environmental research projects worldwide.

For the first week of December, he will be working at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, a nature preserve on the west shore of the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland.

"There, I will be working with scientists researching the health of that particular forest, doing such tasks as taking soil samples and measuring tree growth," Chasse says. "I will be communicating with my students each day from the forest via satellite phone."

He also has started a blog, allowing students and others to keep updated about his activities while he is away: <http://www.earthwatch2.org/lff/chasse>.

Earthwatch will cover all of Chasse's expenses and pay for a substitute teacher in his classroom while he is away. Once he returns, Earthwatch will fund a project Chasse will work on with his students—something he hopes to be able to share with the whole Fairmount community.

Opera Stars, in the Cafeteria

Continuing their annual work with Fairmount, performers with the San Francisco Opera came to the school in October to help students put on a production of the classic opera *La Bohème*.

For the past several years, fifth-grade teacher Maureen Sullivan has been invit-

ing the Opera to Fairmount, giving students a chance to sing alongside stars of the world-famous company.

The shortened production was performed by fourth- and fifth-grade students for the whole school, to rave reviews from other students (and, of course, a few proud parents).

Bilingual and Biliterate

Fairmount parents and teachers are still giving tours to parents who are interested in sending their children to a school that leaves children bilingual and biliterate in English and Spanish after six years.

Teachers and parents give tours and provide details on the school's instructional and extracurricular programs, which include arts, environment, gardening, physical education, choir, music, and more. Just drop by for a visit, 65 Chenery Street (corner of Randall) any Tuesday at 9 a.m., or if that doesn't work, call the school office at 695-5669 to schedule another date.

—Jan Goben

ALVARADO

The Bounty of Science

Alvarado Elementary School just welcomed science consultant Carolyn Gencarella to the staff, and the former elementary school teacher already has fourth- and fifth-grade students absorbed in paper towels. Using both math and science, Gencarella is teaching the children how to test towels and predict which will hold the most liquid. The students are also evaluating various companies' advertising claims. With the knowledge they gain, they'll be able to tell which brand is the best bargain.

Modeled after Alvarado's renowned arts program, the science program gives students in each classroom an eight-week rotation in the science lab, with Gencarella overseeing the experiments. The program is supported by Alvarado's PTA, which also pays for science field trips to the new Academy of Sciences, Slide Ranch in Marin, and the Coyote Point Museum in San Mateo County.

At the same time, classroom teachers are implementing the second year of FOSS (Full Option Science System), a science program for kids K-8 developed by U.C. Berkeley's Lawrence Hall of Science. The program provides teachers' guides, videos, reading materials, and equipment kits for studies in life science, physical science, earth science, technology, and scientific reasoning.

Meanwhile, Alvarado parent Angela Danison is working with Gencarella and the school's teachers to ensure that science learning is well integrated in the classroom. Her assistance, says Gencarella, has been a real boost.

"The opportunity to focus on what I love to teach in a supportive community like Alvarado is a joy," Gencarella says.

Fiesta Latina Feels Like Home

The holiday season can be lonely for families far from their homeland, so Alvarado's English-Language Acquisition Committee (ELAC) decided to bring Latino festivities to school by hosting a Fiesta Latina on Friday, Dec. 5.

"Most of us cannot travel to see our people, so this just gives the feeling of home," says Alvarado mom and ELAC president Angélica Guerrero, a native of Mexico.

The night of live music, native foods, and dancing is based on "Las Fiestas," a tradition of celebrations that are used in Latin America to mark a holiday, the arrival of a fair, or the anniversary of a patron saint. In many Latin American countries, Las Fiestas kick into high gear over the winter holidays. Some celebrations encompass a city block; others involve an entire town. In most events, the whole community is invited to eat, drink, and dance, Guerrero says.

Celebrations vary from country to country, so Alvarado's Fiesta Latina will blend traditions from several, including El Salvador, Guatemala, and Mexico. From 6 to 10 p.m., families from Alvarado and beyond can enjoy traditional finger foods—called *antojitos*—such as tamales and tostadas, and dance to the "tropicale" music of the band Los Compas, playing punta, salsa, and cumbia rhythms.

"It's music to make you move, to make you warm," says Guerrero. "We communicate a lot through dancing."

Tickets cost \$10 per adult and \$1 per child, accompanied by a parent or caregiver. The cost of admission includes a bottle of water. To join the fun, contact Nancy Velasco at 572-7020 or e-mail her at ncarolvelasco@yahoo.com.

—Heather World



SCHOOL CONTACTS

Alvarado Elementary School
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Fairmount Elementary School
Ana Lunardi, Principal
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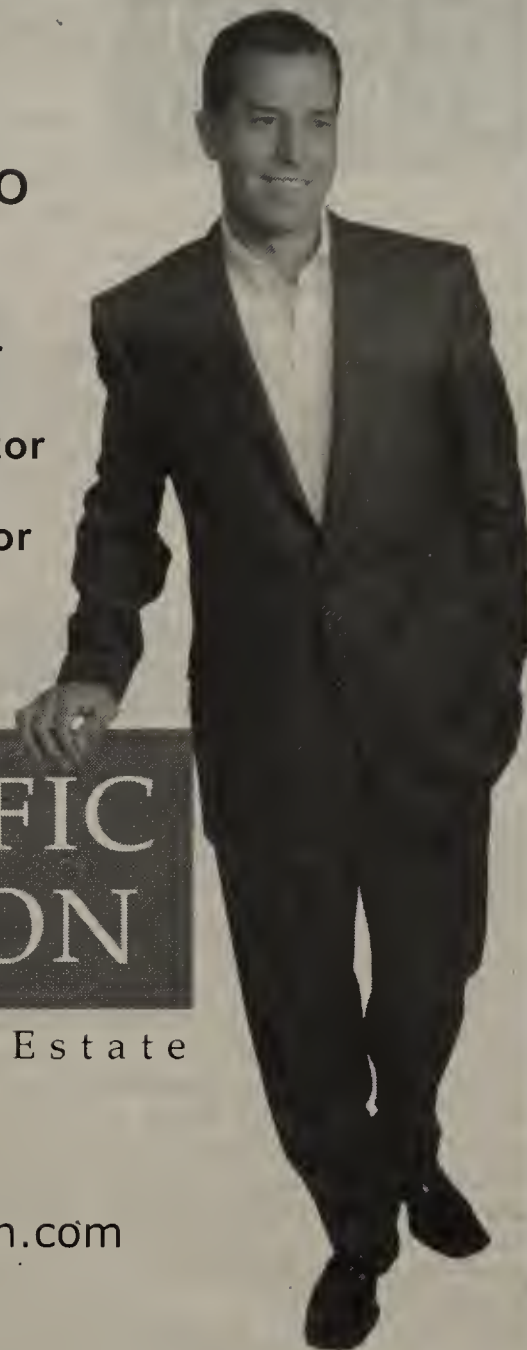
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MORE BOOKS TO READ

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A lonely moose and a boy ballet dancer shine in this month's book selection, provided by *Voice* bookworm Karol Barske and children's librarian Carol Small, of the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Branch Library. To check out books—or CDs or DVDs—drop by the library at 451 Jersey Street, near Castro Street. There's a good chance the doors will be open, because the branch just added another day to its schedule: Sunday. Hours are now Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Wednesday, 1 to 9 p.m.; Thursday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Friday, 1 to 6 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 to 5 p.m. For information about book availability or library programs, call Small or branch manager Alice McCloud at 355-5707; www.sfpl.org.

Adult Fiction

- Six new stories appear in the rerelease of *Holidays on Ice*, David Sedaris' collection of seasonal essays, which includes tales from his stint as a Macy's elf.
- During a visit to their father on the Swedish island of Hammarby, three half-sisters recall buried childhood memories in *A Blessed Child* by Linn Ullmann.
- In *The Wettest County in the World*, Matt Bondurant taps his own family history to tell the Depression-era story of two moonshining brothers, whose trial for conspiracy is covered by a fictionalized Sherwood Anderson.
- The stories of an American spy, a young Afghan man raised by the Taliban, an elderly English doctor married to an Afghan woman, and a Russian woman looking for her missing brother intertwine in *The Wasted Vigil* by Nadeem Aslam.

Adult Nonfiction

- Savannah Knoop describes her masquerade as a celebrated transgender ex-prostitute author, whose books were actually written by her sister-in-law Laura Albert, in *Girl Boy Girl: How I Became JT Leroy*.
- In *The Trial of Donald Rumsfeld: A Prosecution by Book*, Michael Ratner, president of the Center for Constitutional Rights, presents a mock trial of 14 U.S. government and military officials.
- Mark Richardson retraces the 1974 journey of the author of *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* in *Zen and Now: On the Trail of Robert Pirsig*.

- John Mitchinson and John Lloyd, masterminds of the British quiz show *Q!*, give the facts about 100 animals, including the critters' sometimes disturbing mating habits, in *The Book of Animal Ignorance: Everything You Think You Know Is Wrong*.

Children's Fiction

- Moose has no family or friends, but his life turns upside down when he rescues a bird who cannot fly, in *The Lonely Moose* by John Segal. Ages 4 to 6.
- Mo Willems' early reader *I Love My New Toy* features an optimistic, reckless pig and a pessimistic, cautious elephant. Ages 4 to 6.
- Tucker Dohr, *The Only Boy in Ballet Class*, always gets to play the prince, but he sometimes gets teased, so when the football team needs an extra player, Tucker uses his dance skills on the field. Written by Denise Eliana Gruska. Ages 4 to 7.
- In *Bones and the Math Test Mystery* by David A. Adler, Jeffrey Bones has to follow the clues to find his missing paper. Ages 4 to 8.
- When their cousin Salim disappears from a ride on the giant ferris wheel, Ted and Kat search London for him in *The London Eye Mystery* by Siobhan Dowd. Ages 10 and up.

Children's Nonfiction

- *Mazes Around the World*, by Mary D. Lankford, with illustrations by Karen Dugan, describes many varieties of mazes, including an 8,000-year-old Egyptian labyrinth and the "Minotaur's Maze" in Greece. Ages 8 and up.

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Eureka Valley-Harvey Milk Branch Library
1 José Sarria Ct. (3555 16th St.), 355-5616
(Closed for renovation. Events held at Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St.)

Glen Park Branch Library
2825 Diamond St., 355-2858

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Mission Branch Library
300 Bartlett St., 355-2800

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1-5	1-9	10-9	10-9	10-6	1-6	10-6

LIBRARY EVENTS

Lapsits and Story Time

- Enjoy songs, stories, and finger plays at the infant/toddler *lapsits*, on Tuesdays, Dec. 2, 16, 23, and 30, from 10:15 a.m. to 10:40 a.m. Then stay for a half-hour *preschool story time*, for children ages 3 to 5, starting 11 a.m.

Movies for Kids

- *Films* for kids 3 to 5, including "Morris' Disappearing Bag," "Pete's a Pizza," and "Remarkable, Riderless, Runaway Tricycle," will be shown on Tuesday, Dec. 9, at 10:15 and 11 a.m.

Events are held at the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Branch Library at 451 Jersey Street. For information, call 355-5707.



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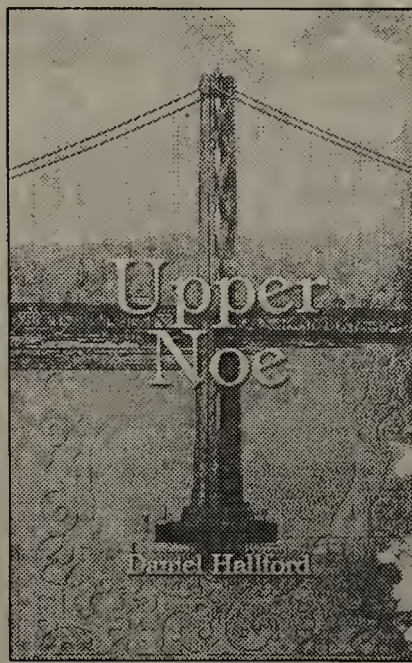
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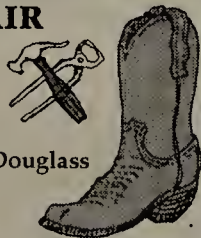
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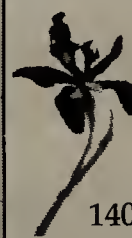
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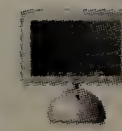
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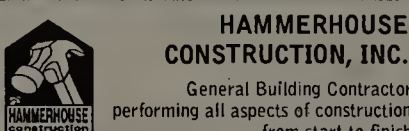
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It's easy. Just type or print the text of your ad, multiply the number of words by **40¢ per word**, and send us a check or money order for the total. (Note that a phone number, including area code, counts as one word.) Then mail your ad text and payment, made out to the *Noe Valley Voice*, so that we receive it by the **15th of the month** before the month in which you'd like to advertise. The address is *Noe Valley Voice* Class Ads, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. (Sorry, the *Voice* is unable to accept Class Ads by phone or e-mail.)

10 for 10 discount: The *Noe Valley Voice* publishes 10 months a year. (We're on vacation in January and August.) If you place the *same* class ad in 10 issues, you are entitled to a 10 percent discount. To figure your cost, deduct 10 percent from the total amount due for 10 issues.

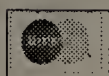
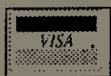
The next *Voice* will be the February 2009 issue, distributed in Noe Valley starting Feb. 2.

The deadline for Class Ads is Jan. 15. Note: The issue will be displayed for one month on our website: www.noevalleyvoice.com.

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and now for the RUMORS behind the news

Changes Left and Right

By Mazook

OBAMA-RAMA: The results of the Nov. 4 election were bittersweet. The sweet spot was the election of Barack Obama, someone who believes government is, to quote Abraham Lincoln, "of the people, by the people, and for the people." The bitter pill, for many of us, was the passage of Proposition 8, halting gay marriage in California.

Prop. 8, unless overturned, will deprive gay—and all other couples—the equal protection that is guaranteed under the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution (ratified by the states in 1868).

With strong feeling about both the prop and the president, voter turnout in Noe Valley was outstanding. Of the 16,582 who registered to vote in Noe Valley, according to statistics compiled by the San Francisco Department of Elections, 89 percent came to the polls or mailed in their ballots. We were second only to Eureka Valley and Upper Market voters, who topped all city neighborhoods with an 89.5 percent turnout. Diamond Heights weighed in at 87 percent, and North Bernal 86 percent.

Obama won a landslide in Noe Valley, racking up 13,434 (91%) of the 14,754 votes cast. John McCain pulled in 950 votes (6.4%), and Ralph Nader came in a distant third with 129 votes (1%).

In the Congressional race, it was Nancy Pelosi 10,647, followed by Cindy

Sheehan with 2,247 votes. On Prop. 8, the Noe nays were 13,080 (89%) to 1,273 yeas (11%).

In other state props, Noe Valley voted yes on farm animal standards (10,913 yes, 3,008 no); and no on parental notification (12,357 no, 1,683 yes).



VALENTINE'S DAY has been circled on the calendar for the transition of 24th Street's Bell Market to Whole Foods (see last month's front-page story at www.noevalleyvoice.com).

According to Whole Foods vice president of development for Northern California, Glen Moon, who is in charge of this project, Bell will be closing its doors on Feb. 14 and moving all its stuff out of the building by the last day of February.

"We will take possession on the first of March," Moon says, "and work through the permitting process for our plans to [build out] the store. Depending on how long it takes for permits, the store will re-open anywhere from, very optimistically, four to six months."

Moon adds that "the people at Bell Market [Kroger Foods/Ralphs] have been very accommodating and helpful to us in making this transition and giving us full access to make the measurements necessary to draw the plans. They've actually been extraordinarily cooperative, which is unusual in my experience. It shows great respect for the neighborhood and their customers," he says.

Evidently, Moon travels all over the U.S. helping Whole Foods open new stores. "I recently was able to open a store in Massachusetts in just over four months, but there the permitting process went very smoothly," says Moon. "Six months is more realistic for this location."

The Bell site will be the fifth Whole Foods location in San Francisco.

"We are working now to expedite the

permit process, and also working with San Francisco Supervisor Bevan Dufty."

Moon says he is also reaching out to various groups and individuals in Noe Valley, to explain Whole Foods' plans and to respond to people's concerns. He says he enjoys coming to our "vibrant" neighborhood and is currently scheduling meetings with the Noe Valley Association, the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association, and the Friends of Noe Valley. He looks forward to meeting their memberships and getting neighborhood input, he says.

Sounds great. But might I also suggest that Whole Foods offer the Bell Market staff, many of whom have served us in the neighborhood for years, positions at the new market?

Oh, and what's going to happen to my Club Card, and all those points I earned? Can I transfer them to Whole Foods?



24TH STREET SPIN: It looks as if Streetlight Records could close by the end of January. The space is currently available for lease by Rockwell Properties, and agent Mark Kaplan says, "We've been getting a fair amount of interest in the space, primarily by clothing retailers, and we actually are negotiating a lease for a clothes store right now."

The rent being asked for the 2,000-square-foot store, according to Kaplan, is \$12,000 per month. The basement is also available for storage for an additional \$3,000 per month, "but that's negotiable," he says.

Closing up and moving after roughly six months is the sunglasses store Glare, which sat in the small shop at 4021 24th Street.



RESTAURANT ROUNDUP: Rumors that the restaurant space where Kookez

used to be will be reopening by the end of December are true. (See last month's Rumors.) The new spot will be City Grille, according to one of the owners, Stefano Coppola.

That's right. Coppola is the chef at Lupa Italian Restaurant, next door to the Grille. Apparently he will be competing with himself.

"No, not at all," smiles Coppola. "We are going to have classic American fare, you know, burgers, steaks, chops, and ribs, as well as chicken and fish, and end with an apple pie or cheesecake."

Opening the last week of November in Uptown Noe Valley was Henry's Hunan Restaurant, on Church near 29th Street. This is the fifth Henry's to open in the city, with the first started in 1974 on Kearny Street in Chinatown.

Restaurant manager and longtime Henry's employee Eddie Zhu says, "Things are just great here, ever since we opened November 22. People in this neighborhood understand how Hunan is different from other Chinese cuisines."

When asked which of the 81 dishes he serves are the most popular, he said without much hesitation, "Numbers 59, 53, and 56." Those would be Chicken with String Bean, Henry's Special Seafood, and Curry Chicken. He adds, "If you like hot and sour stuff, try it here."

Henry's Hunan has free delivery for orders of \$20 or more, and the menu is available online.

A Noe Valley family who opened the Kasa Indian Eatery this summer, on the corner of Noe and 18th streets over the hill in Eureka Valley, has received rave reviews from the *San Francisco Chronicle's* "Bargain Bites," 7x7 magazine, and ABC's *The View from the Bay*. The reviews point out that Kasa has exciting food—particularly the Kati rolls, at af-

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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RUMORS

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

fordable prices.

"Yes," says Tim Volkema, who with wife Meredith moved to Noe Street (near 24th) this summer, "we are doing pretty good, but what really gets me is that now we have several diners who are coming in four to five times a week. Needless to say, we are very pleased."

Volkema encourages Noe Valleons to go online (www.kasaindian.com) and look at the menu, and phone or send in your order. "We provide Noe Valley with free delivery," he says.



JUST AWESOME GAMES is the name of a new shop opening at 816 Diamond just south of 24th Street, in the space vacated several months ago by Financial Title Company.

"We should be opening in mid-December," says co-owner Erik Mantsch, "and we will be featuring a wide variety of board games and educational games."

Mantsch says he moved to San Francisco from Portland to start up his own business, and found that "there were very few game stores in the Bay Area. I found only one other [specialty] game store in San Francisco, and we wanted to open in a family-friendly neighborhood. So everything worked out."

Everything has apparently also worked for Cary LaScala, who just opened a women's and men's clothing store called Cary Lane. It's on 24th Street near Church, across the street from Shoe Biz.

Besides being an entrepreneur, LaScala is a serious musician, who plays the drums and has a recording studio in the



Henry's Hunan Restaurant opened last month, in the storefront formerly occupied by Pescheria seafood restaurant. Meanwhile, Drewes Brothers meat market next door sold 1,200 Thanksgiving turkeys.

Photo by Sally Smith

back of the store. He was last with the San Francisco band Bellavista, and currently does session work for the New York group Fischerspooner, which is big in the electro-dance genre.

"I used to be a clothing buyer for a major department store and have always liked working in retail sales, so I decided to focus on buying and selling authentic designer labels at a discount, anywhere from 20 to 60 percent off their original retail price," says LaScala.

The labels? "For men, we carry Apolis Activism, J. Lindeberg, Rosasen, and Oliver Spencer; Addict, Ben Sherman, and Paper Denim & Cloth for both men and women; and Loomstate, Kasil, Miss Sixty, Ksubi, and Mark Jacobs for women."

Also brand new on 24th Street is the Jewelry Box, which has taken the space

formerly occupied by Rose Quartz. The new boutique is being operated by Jenny Khouri, whose husband Mousa Khouri and brother-in-law Mike Khouri have owned and operated St. Clair's liquor store next door on the corner of 24th and Sanchez since 1991.

"We are selling all kinds of jewelry from rings and bracelets to necklaces and earrings and have a lot of gemstones on sale," says Mike Khouri.

Although the jewelry store space was an icehouse until 1998, Mike says the store does not carry any diamonds.

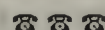


CONGRATS GO OUT to the Noe Valley Association, which was awarded "Best Community Benefit District" of the 12 CBDs in San Francisco by the Neighborhood Empowerment Network (NEN). Over 400 people attended the awards dinner at City Hall, where the presentation was made by KFOG radio personality Peter Finch and the award accepted by NVA director Debra Niemann. "It was quite an honor," says Niemann.

FYI, NEN is a partnership of city agencies, local non-profits, and neighborhood organizations, and is administered in the city's Administrations Office.

By the way, next up on the NVA calendar is a Dec. 9 hearing before the News Rack Commission at City Hall, about placement of news-rack pedestals in Downtown Noe Valley. The NVA wants to replace all those individual boxes on the sidewalks.

Thanks to Drewes Meat Market and its customers, more than 100 turkeys were donated to the Sisters of Charity, the Mother Teresa nuns headquartered at St. Paul's Church. Drewes sold 1,200 turkeys this Thanksgiving. You are all probably still eating the leftovers.



BEFORE SIGNING OFF for 2008, special thoughts go out to the families of three stellar Noe Valleons: Daniel Cassidy, Albert Lanier, and Paul Kantus. Cassidy and Lanier died in October, and Kantus in November.

Daniel Cassidy was an author, filmmaker, scriptwriter, singer, and composer, and an activist in this city's Irish and labor communities. He won the 2007 American Book Award for *How the Irish Invented Slang: The Secret Language of the Crossroads*. And he was featured in these pages in March 2008.

Albert Lanier, the husband of Ruth Asawa and father of five kids and many grandchildren living in Noe Valley, was another Renaissance man. Actually, he was a Bauhaus man and a leader in the field of architecture, with several local houses to his credit. He also contributed his gardening and artistic talents to the library and local schools. (See story on page 7.)

Finally, Paul Kantus, born in Noe Valley in 1926, was the keeper of the Noe Valley Archives and the president of the now moribund East & West of Castro Street Improvement Club, founded in 1904. Kantus also was a friend and a great resource for this Rumors column. I believe he attended every community meeting held in Noe Valley in the past 35 years. (Read the obit on our front page.) I will miss you, Paul.

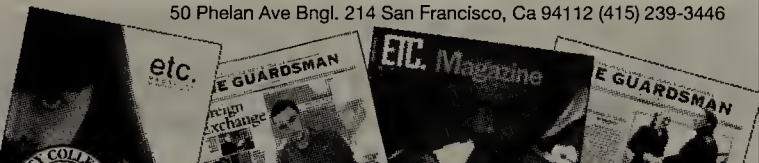
Have a happy New Year's, and we'll see you back here in February. ■



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Jour 21: News Writing and Reporting

3 units	M/W/F	10:00-11:00 a.m.	HC 213	Gonzales
	W	6:30-9:30 p.m.	1800 Market St. 306	Rochmis

Jour 22: Feature Writing

3 units	T/R	11:00-12:30 p.m.	Bngl. 214	Graham
	R	6:30-9:30 p.m.	1125 Valencia St. 218	Rochmis

Jour 23: Electronic Copy Editing

3 units	T	6:30-9:30 p.m.	1125 Valencia St. 218	Rochmis
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Jour 24: Newspaper Laboratory

3 units	M/W/F	12:00-1:00 p.m.	Bngl. 214	Gonzales
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Jour 29: Magazine Editing & Production

3 units	M	6:30-8:30 p.m.	1125 Valencia St. 218	Graham
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Jour 31: Internship Experience

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 Meetings: Second Thursday of the month,
 Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100
 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

Church Street Professionals

Contacts: Gary Norman, 282-5685,
 or Susan Levinson, 647-3007
 E-mail: gary.norman@edwardjones.com
 Meetings: Call or e-mail for information.

Diamond Heights Community Association

Contact: Betsy Eddy, 239-5776
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31529,
 San Francisco, CA 94131
 Meetings: First Thursday of the month, 7:30
 p.m. Call for location.

Dolores Heights Improvement Club

E-mail: dhic123@gmail.com
 Website: www.doloresheights.org
 Meetings: Board meetings bimonthly; mem-
 bership semi-annually.

Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)

Contacts: Pat Lockhart, 282-9360;
 Diane McCarney, 824-0303; or
 Deanna Mooney, 821-4045
 Mailing Address: 560 Duncan St.,
 San Francisco, CA 94131
 Meetings: Call for details.

East & West of Castro Street Improvement Club

Contact: Paul Kantus, 647-3753
 Mailing Address: 492 Douglass St.,
 San Francisco, CA 94114
 Meetings: Irregular, call to confirm.

Eureka Valley Promotion Association

Contact: Lion Barnett, 255-3624
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 14137,
 San Francisco, CA 94114
 Meetings: Third Thursday of the month
 (except December), Eureka Valley Recrea-
 tion Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

Fair Oaks Neighbors

Contact: Joyce Kurtz, 401-6362
 Mailing Address: 261 Fair Oaks St., San
 Francisco, CA 94110
 Note: The annual Fair Oaks Street Fair is
 held the day before Mother's Day.

MORE GROUPS TO JOIN**Fairmount Heights Neighborhood Association**

Contact: Gregg Brooks
 E-mail: sflyric@yahoo.com
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31059, San
 Francisco, CA 94131
 Meetings: E-mail for details.

Friends of Dolores Park Playground

Contact: Eli Merritt, 285-3774
 E-mail: emerr@earthlink.net
 Mailing Address: 3786 20th St., San
 Francisco, CA 94110
 Meetings: E-mail for information.

Friends of Glen Canyon Park

Contact: Richard Craib, 648-0862
 Mailing Address: 140 Turquoise Way, San
 Francisco, CA 94131
 Meetings: Call for details.

Friends of Noe Courts Playground

Contact: Laura Norman
 E-mail: lauranor@yahoo.com
 Mailing Address: c/o Friends of Noe Valley,
 P.O. Box 460953, San Francisco, CA 94146
 Meetings: E-mail for dates and times.

Friends of Noe Valley (FNV)

Contact: Richard May
 E-mail: rambooks@pachell.net
 Website: www.friendsofnoevalley.com
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 460953, San
 Francisco, CA 94146
 Meetings: First or second Thursday of the
 month (call or e-mail to confirm), at
 St. Philip's Parish Hall, 725 Diamond St.

Friends of On Lck's 30th Street Senior Center

Contact: Marianne Hampton, 601-7845
 Mailing Address: 225 30th St., San
 Francisco, CA 94131
 Meetings: Occasional. Call for details.

Friends of Noe Valley Recreation Center and Park

Contact: Alexandra Torre
 E-mail: noe_park@atorre.com
 Website: www.noevalleyreccenter.com
 Meetings: E-mail or check website.

Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association

Contact: John Barbey, 695-0990
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 192114,
 San Francisco, CA 94119
 Meetings: Quarterly. Call for details.

Noe Screenwriting Discussion Group

Contact: Kendall Callas, 821-1310
 E-mail: kendall@microcounsel.com
 Meetings: Monthly; e-mail for details.
 Pre-requisite: Completed a screenplay or a
 screenwriting course.

Noe Strolls "Playgroup on Wheels"

Contact: noestrolls@aol.com
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Noe Valley Association-24th Street Community Benefit District

Contact: Debra Niemann, nemo@rcn.com
 Dispatch: To report spills, debris, or garbage
 on 24th Street, call 559-8492.

Noe Valley Democratic Club

Contact: Andy Fleischman, 641-5838
 Meetings: Third Wednesday of the month;
 St. Philip's Church, 725 Diamond St., 7:30
 p.m. Parking available in lot off Elizabeth.

Noe Valley Farmers' Market

Saturdays, 8 a.m. to noon, on 24th between
 Sanchez and Vicksburg Street
 Contact: Paula Benton, 248-1332
 Mailing Address: 4104 24th St., #401, San
 Francisco, CA 94114
 Meetings: Second Thursday of the month,
 Noe Valley Ministry (co-sponsor), 1021
 Sanchez St., 8 p.m.

Noe Valley Library Campaign

Contacts: Kim Drew, 643-4695,
kkdrew@yahoo.com; Marian Chatfield-
 Taylor, 626-7512, ext. 103
 Mailing Address: Friends of the
 San Francisco Public Library, 391 Grove St.,
 San Francisco, CA 94102

Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association (NVMPA)

Contacts: Donna Davis, 647-2116, or Gwen
 Sanderson, 550-7577
 E-mail: info@noevalleymerchants.com;
 register at www.noevalleymerchants.com.
 Meetings: Last Tuesday of the month, Bank
 of America, 4098 24th St., 9 a.m.

Noe Valley Parent Network

An e-mail resource network for parents
 Contact: Mina Kenvin
 E-mail: minaken@gmail.com

Noe Valley Preparedness Committee

Contact: Maxine Fasulis, 641-5536
 E-mail: mfasulis@yahoo.com
 Meetings: Call for details.

Outer Noe Valley Merchants

Contact: Jim Appenrodt, 641-1500
 Mailing Address: 294 29th St., San
 Francisco, CA 94131
 Meetings: Call for details.

San Jose/Guerrero Coalition to Save Our Streets

Contact: Don Oshiro, 285-8188
 E-mail: contact@sanjoseguerrero.com
 Website: www.sanjoseguerrero.com
 Meetings: See website.

See Jane Run Running Programs

Contacts: Shauna Nyborg, 415-401-8338;
 Deb DeFanti, 415-839-9393
 E-mail: events@seejanerun.com
 Address: 3910 24th Street (at Sanchez)
 Website: <http://www.seejanerun.com/t-Training.aspx>

Southwest Mission Neighborhood Association (SWMNA)

Boundaries: 24th Street to Cesar Chavez and
 Fair Oaks to Mission
 Contact: Lori Oshiro, Secretary
 E-mail: lori@tail-wagging.com
 Website: www.tail-wagging.com
 Meetings: E-mail for information.

Upper Noe Neighbors

Contact: Vicki Rosen, 285-0473
 Mailing Address: 169 Valley St., San
 Francisco, CA 94131
 Meetings: Last Thursday of the month,
 Upper Noe Recreation Center, Day and
 Sanchez, 7:30 p.m.



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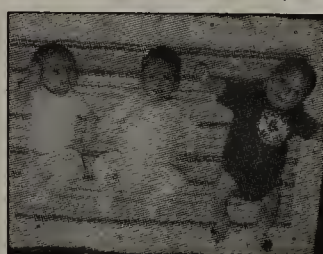
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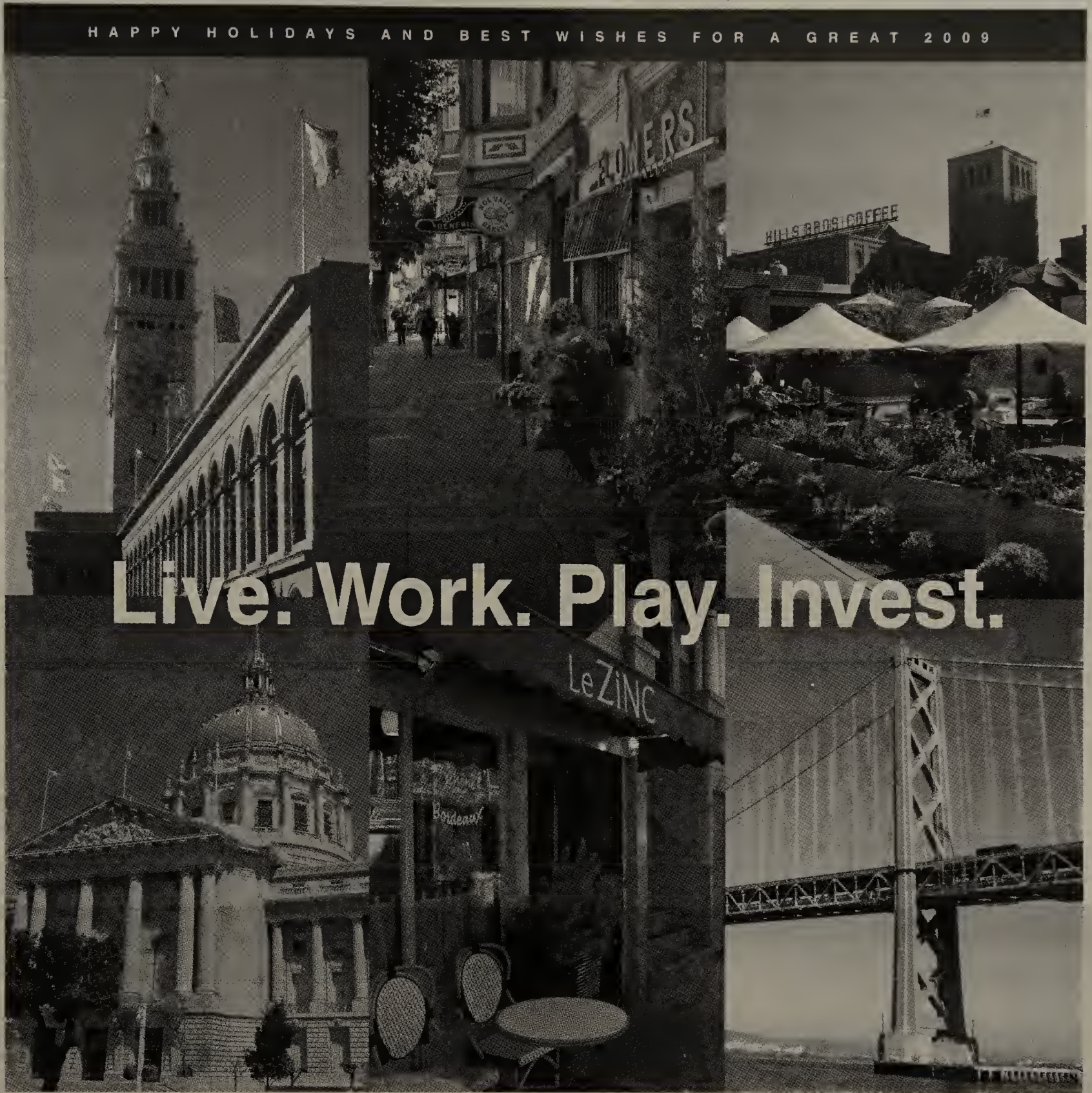
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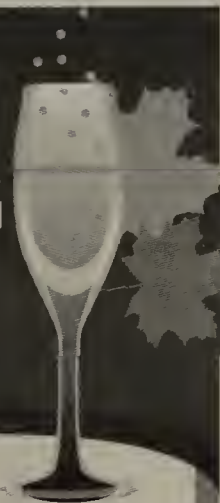
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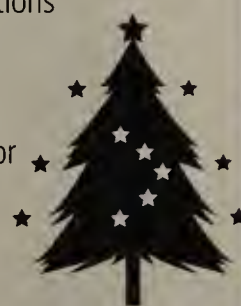
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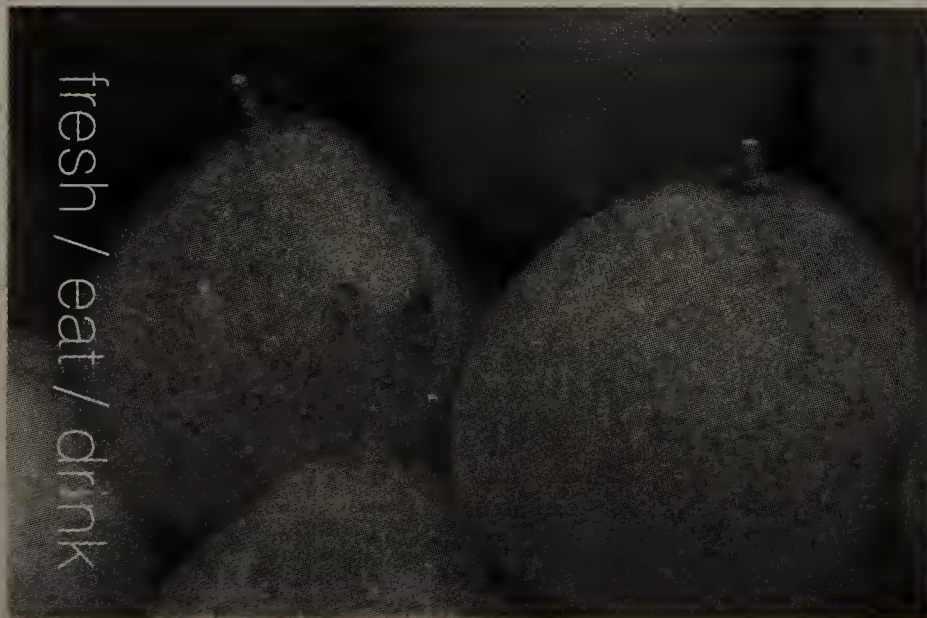
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FEATURED PROPERTIES

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Offered at: \$1,495,000

Marjorie Almer
415-296-0123

2311 19TH STREET, POTRERO HILL



2008 CH&D award winning eco-friendly home with panoramic views. 3 bedrooms, 3.5 baths, living, dining and delicious kitchen, outstanding pentroom. Three large terraces, one with a 8-person Hot Springs Tub. 2-car parking.

Offered at: \$2,195,000

Mike Suyeishi
415-296-0123

327 HILL STREET, EUREKA VALLEY



Pano view 3 BR, 3 BA condo on two levels with two decks. The main level features two bedrooms and two bathrooms, living room with fireplace and stunning views. Lower level with separate entrance, that is ideal for a large master suite or home office. Laundry in the unit. Garage parking. Close to shopping district and transportation.

Offered at: \$1,195,000

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4 Bedrooms and 3.5 bathrooms, 2-car parking on coveted San Francisco block above Dolores Park. Totally remodeled, exquisite Craftsman details, large yard, patio, skyline views.

Offered at: \$2,295,000

SellingSF.com
415-642-8000

50 HILIRITAS AVENUE, GLEN PARK



Terrific multi-level single family home with legal in-law guest apartment. 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths. Located in secluded hills on a large lot. Refinished hardwood floors. 2-car side-by-side private garage.

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2-unit fixer on prime block! Near 24th Street! Upper unit: 2-level, 2 bedrooms, lower unit: 1 bedroom, deck and yard. Needs work. Probate. Great Opportunity!

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SAN FRANCISCO MARIN PENINSULA

THE LAST PAGE

For Rent: One Crazy Place

BY ROBIN DUTTON-COOKSTON

Our downstairs neighbor, Laura, just moved out. She left in a civil manner, so we don't have to worry about her setting fire to the house or coming back to steal our mail. But she also left because of us. We drove her crazy. We have that effect on people who live underneath us.

It all started back at our old flat on Alamo Square. Randy, who I liken to a gray-haired drug-dealing version of Schneider from *One Day at a Time*, squatted in the storage unit below our building. He parked his white serial-killer van in the driveway at all hours.

One day, his meth-head girlfriend stood outside our place with a metal rake and scraped the sidewalk for about seven hours. That *Night of the Living Dead* moment freaked me out so bad that we packed up our precious baby and fled our awesome Victorian for the so-called safer digs of Noe Valley.

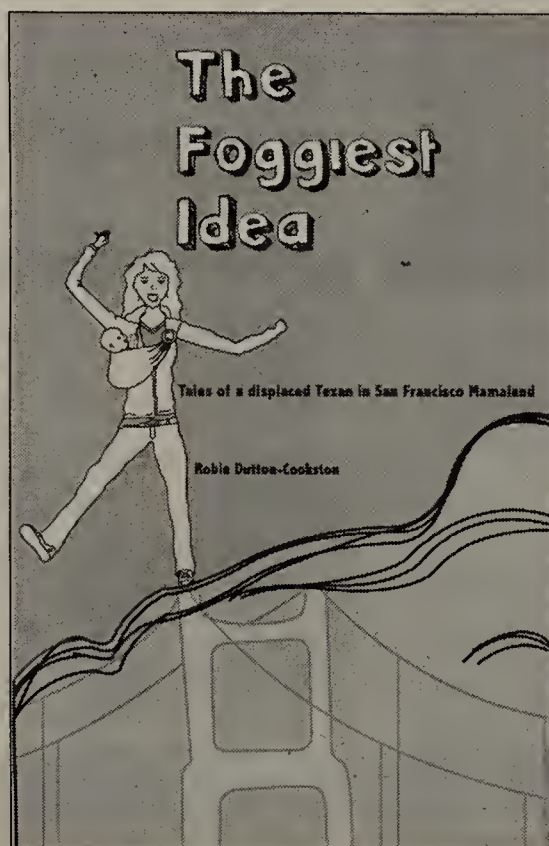
But trouble soon came a knockin'. Bill, who lived in the in-law unit below us, was initially nice enough. Friendly. Took his turn taking out the trash and recycling. But Bill went on a downward spiral after getting laid off. He stayed up for three solid days on a drinking binge that turned him psychotic.

Poor Bill put a few belongings in a ragged suitcase and a paper bag, and he walked down our street into the Mission neighborhood.... I started to wonder if my family made our neighbors turn crazy.

Bill ended up hallucinating a massive scenario in which snipers hid in trees and I took his side (thank God) against a conspiracy put forth by the landlord. It all culminated one sunny spring day when he gave me a look on the stairs that scared me so much I was afraid to go home. I imagined him smashing in our window with a baseball bat or pushing me down the stairs in front of my child.

Poor Bill put a few belongings in a ragged suitcase and a paper bag, and he walked down our street into the Mission neighborhood. I thought he was off to become homeless, but he checked himself into S.F. General. Our landlord called Bill's family in Los Angeles to come get him, and then Bill was gone.

I started to wonder if my family made our neighbors turn crazy.



Robin Dutton-Cookston has recently published a collection of her pieces about family life in San Francisco.

The in-law unit stayed empty for a year while the owner cleaned out the dusty remnants of Bill's psychosis. And then came Laura.

Laura toured the place while we were out of town in Texas, so she didn't get a chance to sneak-preview the cacophony of stomping and screaming that would go on over her head each day. She quickly became tired of my family's noise. But instead of acting cool about it and just talking to us, Laura threw temper tantrums that shook the walls and rattled the windows.

See I told you we made people crazy.

We made countless compromises in our lifestyle, resulting in greater conflict for our family. We constantly barked at the kids to keep the noise down so as not to bother Laura. Nothing helped.

No matter how much we took off our shoes, closed off the playroom (above Laura's bedroom) until 10 a.m. on weekends and 8 a.m. on weekdays, forced my eldest daughter not to stomp or jump or run or have any sort of fun...no matter how much we did any of those things, Laura became angrier and angrier with us. She called the landlord to complain about us. She slammed her doors.

And she got into this crazy passive-aggressive thing with her bathroom fan.

The cheap fan is located directly underneath my pillow, and it vibrates our bedroom

floor so hard the bed shakes. It gives me a headache even if I am up and walking around. If Laura turned it on while I was trying to sleep, I might as well have gotten up and cleaned the house.

We also had our second child right around the time Laura perfected her fan technique. The fan woke the baby up from her naps and bedtime sleep pretty much every day. This greatly hampered any glimmer of sympathy I could muster when Laura yelled at us that she was "completely sleep-deprived" because she couldn't sleep in until 11 on Saturdays due to my children playing.

Suffice it to say that Laura completely sucked as a neighbor. But our landlord totally took her side and always asked us to keep it down. One time, he even went so far as to question our parenting, a move any landlord should know is guaranteed to earn them a place in San Francisco tenant law hell.

Yes, we are happy that Laura is now gone. And even though we are curious about the next person who will live downstairs, we are currently celebrating. We've been in this house for five years, and we love our "affordable" San Francisco digs.

I let the kids run straight into the playroom at 6:30 a.m. this morning and dump a giant box of Legos on the floor. They screamed and stomped, as children are supposed to do. At dinnertime this evening, we made a family toast to Laura. "Here's to being as loud as we want in our own home!"

ABOUT ROBIN DUTTON-COOKSTON

Robin Dutton-Cookston, 35, is an author and columnist whose writings populate many web and print publications, including *Mothering*, *Hip Mama*, *Clamor*, and *Mom Writer's Literary Magazine*. This fall, she published *The Foggiest Idea*, a collection of essays she has accumulated since moving to San Francisco in 2002. It's a "Tales of the City for the playground set," she says. The 160-page paperback is available on Amazon.com or can be special-ordered through local bookstores. She also puts out an "old-fashioned photocopied zine" called *Apron Strings*.

In addition to her literary pursuits, Dutton-Cookston works for San Francisco's official website for families (www.SFkids.org), and blogs at www.thefoggiestidea.wordpress.com. She lives in Upper Noe with "one husband, two little girls, one cat, and lots and lots of spiders." This is her sixth year making a ruckus in the neighborhood.

The Noe Valley Voice invites you to submit fiction, literary nonfiction, or poetry for publication on the Last Page. Mail submissions, which should be no more than 1,500 words, to the Noe Valley Voice, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Or e-mail lastpage@noevalleyvoice.com. Please include your name, address, and phone number, and an SASE if you want a manuscript returned. We look forward to hearing from you.